THE TOWER OF DAVID

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A BOOK OF STORIES FOR THE PROGRAM OF WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

BY

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To

MRS. JAMES N. GINNS

FOUNDER AND FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE WILMINGTON SECTION, NATIONAL COUNCIL OF JEWISH WOMEN, LOYAL WORKER AND FAITHFUL FRIEND, THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED BY THE AUTHOR

THE TOWER OF DAVID

This is the tower that Roman Titus spared,
When the walls crumbled, and the hungry fire
Consumed the holy Dwelling of our God,
And vanquished Israel wept above the funeral pyre.

"Of all the towers in high Jerusalem,"
He said, "let this one battlement remain,
That all the world in far-off centuries
May know what stubborn walls my warriors died to gain."

Long vanquished lies the iron race of Rome;
Their dust blots out the story of their wars;
But Israel steadfast and unshattered stands
Like David's Tower, firm beneath the changeless stars.

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PREFACE

THE purpose of this volume is to furnish material suitable for programs for women's organizations throughout the year and to assist those in charge in the preparation of such programs. The importance of the story in the literary program is developed at length in Part II of this book. The need for short stories which may be used as an integral part of the program justifies the publication of this and similar books for women readers; there is a woeful scarcity of stories dealing with the life and problems of the American Jewess; if these stories of mine, Jewish in sympathy and background, short and simple enough to be read as part of such programs, do something to fill this need, I am satisfied.

While preparing this volume, I have been encouraged and assisted by our National President, Miss Rose Brenner, our Executive Secretary, Mrs. Estelle Sternberger, and our newly appointed National Chairman of the Committee on Religion, Mrs. Edwin Zugsmith, whom I cannot thank heartily enough for their co-operation.

ELMA EHRLICH LEVINGER.

Wilmington, Del., July, 1924.

PART I

STORIES FOR THE PROGRAM

PART I

THE MOTHER WITH NOTHING TO GIVE

Telling About an Ultra-Modern Jewess

THE lecturer, young, enthusiastic, vibrant, gazed into the faces of the women who made up her audience. Members of the local Council and their guests, they represented the best their small-town Jewry had to offer both in wealth and culture. They tried to be both cosmopolitan and liberal in their programs; the last month they had listened to a college professor from up-state talk on Tagore and his poetry; the following meeting was to be given over to a lecture by a member of the local school board on Vocational Guidance in the Upper Grades; Miss Frank, wedged in between the two, did her best to enlighten her listeners on the subject of "A Jewish Background in the Home."

She made her points rapidly and well: the difficulty of giving a thoroughly Jewish training to the children in an American modern home; the need of Jewish books, pictures, music; the observance of the Jewish holy days. Hannah had never spoken better, yet today she felt strangely dull and discouraged; true, the women of the Council gave her the polite attention that good breeding demands, but she felt that she had left them cold and untouched. Nor did any of the prettily phrased compliments that the members murmured over

their cups of coffee afterwards make her feel that she had succeeded.

A little woman pushed her way through the crowd which had gathered about Hannah Frank, a chic young person whom she recognized as one of the committee who had met her at the train. She was birdlike and quick in her movements; almost incoherent in her rapid, fluttering speech. Miss Frank, who in her travels for the Council met many people and prided herself upon being an excellent judge of human nature, labeled her tersely as "frothy but rather intelligent."

"I'm Mrs. Toleman," she announced gayly. "Now don't pretend you remembered my name. I know I never could, meeting so many strange people at once. Well, you're going to have dinner at our place, so suppose we run away now, 'cause you ought to have a little rest first. You must be ready to drop after your trip and such a long lecture."

She led Hannah after her through the crowd, the short stiff skirts of her taffeta afternoon dress swishing with importance. Hannah, severely tailor-made and inclined to be stout, followed the lithe, golden-haired little person rather amusedly, for she felt exactly like a solid ocean liner drawn by a puffing tug. But she would have been glad to escape from the over-heated vestry room and the babel of voices even if her guide had been far more objectionable.

In the smart little car which she drove with practiced skill, young Mrs. Toleman kept up a perfect stream of bright patter. Had Miss Frank enjoyed her trip, wasn't the weather mild for November, did she make up her perfectly lovely lecture as she went along, or write it out first and then say it off by heart? And

Hannah, answering all her questions with smiling politeness, began to wonder how soon she could respectably make her escape after dinner. She didn't expect to be as lonely "in that dreadful hotel room" as Mrs. Toleman anticipated; a warm bath, kimono and a book seemed at that moment much more inviting than a company dinner table across from her chattering little hostess.

Left alone in the pretty little living room, Hannah nodded with an "I-told-you-so" air, looking curiously about her, while Mrs. Toleman ran upstairs to see whether Junior was still awake and on view to visitors. It had always been Hannah's pet theory that houses expressed their owner's personality; now she felt that the cozy, smartly appointed room justified her belief. The furniture, the curtains, the rugs were all in the best of taste, "a bride's dream of a home," as Hannah phrased it with an ironic smile. There were softly shaded lamps and several brass bowls filled with warmly crimson roses; the gas logs gave a cheery, hospitable look to the great armchairs drawn up at just the right angle to the fireplace. Everything that money could buy—but not the personal touch that invests the most worn furniture and shabbiest carpets with a potent grace. For, as Hannah's sharp eyes noticed, the pictures in their very correct frames had no more character than the display rooms of the art department of a furniture store—all the old favorites, Girl and the Muff, the Flower Market, even the Soul's Awakening; upon the rack of the baby grand stood several sheets of music, the latest things in jazz; there were books, to be sure, in the built-in bookcases, handsomely bound sets of Dickens and Mark

Twain and the World's Best Short Stories, but Hannah felt sure they were never opened, they looked so unfriendly in their prim rows. And books stood between the correct bookends on the davenport table (replicas of Rodin's "Thinker," done in bronze!) but they were all best sellers, ranging geographically from Main Street to the South Sea Islands. . . . Hannah shrugged hopelessly and her face grew very tired. What was the use of talking to women whose lives and religion, like their homes, were just impersonal copies of their neighbors'?

But Hannah brightened up a good deal in the nursery, where Mrs. Toleman led her after an interview with the white-capped nurse. For Junior, just tucked into his ivory crib, was an adorable bundle of pink flesh with his mother's sunny curls. Hannah loved babies and it was only her awe of the stiffly correct nurse that kept her from tossing the youngster in a forbidden bedtime romp. Her eyes were very gentle as she followed her hostess from the nursery.

"You like babies!" commented the little lady as they sat basking in the light of the gas logs. "I'm just crazy over Junior, but that nasty old nurse won't let me hardly touch him. I'll be glad when he's old enough to go to kindergarten and I can have him all to myself between times." Her childish face grew very thoughtful in the rosy firelight. "It's a big responsibility having babies, even if you can have a good nurse for their bottles and send for a specialist every time they cough. I never knew how many other important things you had to think about besides giving them the right things to eat and keeping them clean and warm. Why, when you gave your perfectly lovely talk this afternoon——"

Hannah bit her lip with vexation. One of the most unpleasant features of her work was this post-mortem gushing by empty-headed listeners. Why didn't Mrs. Toleman stick to her more becoming rôle of devoted young mother which suited her so admirably?

"When I heard you telling us to have Jewish homes this afternoon," went on the little lady in the opposite chair, "I thought of this," waving one of her beringed hands toward the carefully selected background. "I felt ashamed when you said that if you went up a street in one of our fashionable suburbs, you couldn't tell a Jewish home from most of the gentile houses in the block. Unless the gentiles happened to be good Protestants or Catholics and had a few books or pictures around to let you know they weren't Jews! And I knew you were right. I never had much time for serious thinking, anyhow. First it was high school and then a year away at Miss Peatson's Finishing School and then I came home to get married. Joe's an old dear, but he's not any more Jewish than I am. I guess he's worse, but it doesn't make so much difference with him; you don't expect men to be awfully religious, do you?

"And it didn't make any difference until Junior came. But now I know I want him to have some religion when he grows up—not just sort of drift along the way his father and I do; go to Temple to say Kaddish twice a year and in the fall for the holidays. We haven't so terribly many Jews in this town and when he grows up, he'll marry a girl who isn't Jewish and it'll about kill me! I know you think I'm silly," as Hannah smiled at her earnestness, "but if you ever have children you'll know how a woman gets jealous of her

daughter-in-law the minute the boy's born. And I don't know why I should care if Junior doesn't stay Jewish—but I will. I guess it's just born in us—we want to have our children stay Jews."

She was silent for a moment, gazing into the flames. "You asked us mothers to bring up our children like Jews," she went on thoughtfully. "But did you know how impossible it was for some of us? When we aren't Jews ourselves in anything but name. It's not always our fault either. My mother was an American and brought up in a small town where there wasn't a Temple or a Jewish Sunday school; her mother was born in this country, too, and wasn't especially Jewish. You tell us to give our children Jewish homes—but some of us have nothing Jewish to give."

Hannah leaned toward her, all the satire gone from her eyes. "You can read," she suggested, "study about Judaism—" but her hostess interrupted her rather rudely.

"You can't get much out of books," she answered fiercely. "You've got to just feel these things—and believe them—if you want to make your children believe in them, too. You wouldn't want Miss Brent, our Protestant head-librarian to teach a Sunday school class for us, would you, and she's terrible brainy and could read up all you wanted her to know just that quick. But she isn't Jewish inside. It's the mother's work, just as you said this afternoon, but I can't do it. And I'm sorry."

Her voice had grown almost bitter, but now it rose lilting and birdlike again. "There's Joe's latchkey in the door," she exclaimed. "Now we can have supper. I know you're almost starved."

Almost thirty years later, Hannah Frank still lecturing for the Council, a little stouter, a little more satiric and sharp in her judgments, met Mrs. Toleman again. The Tolemans had just moved to Buffalo whither Hannah had journeyed to give a talk for a state federation meeting. Again she stood surrounded by noisy admirers, when the little lady, no longer young, but still charmingly lithe and childish, bore down upon her and carried her home for dinner.

"I'm so sorry my boy isn't home," she mourned. "Yes, he's married—a lovely girl; I wish you could meet her. They live with us but just now he's in New York on a business trip for his father and she went along to visit her people. We're just foolish over Miriam."

The meeting had lasted late into the afternoon, after the manner of many convention meetings; in fact, the late dull December day had already deepened into twilight when the two women entered the apartment where the Tolemans now made their home.

"I hear Joe in the dining room now," exclaimed Mrs. Toleman. "We must be dreadfully late. Friday night, too! Would you mind just dropping your wraps in the hall and coming right in to dinner?"

A moment later the two women stood before the dinner table, tempting in its display of shining linen, glassware and silver. Hannah raised her eyebrows inquiringly as her glance fell upon two large silver candlesticks upon the buffet. For they held two tall white candles, not the ornamental, twisted sort, but the kind her own mother had always lit and blessed for the Sabbath. And her astonishment grew as the dainty little woman, her curls just touched with gray, after a hasty

greeting to her husband, stood before them and self-consciously but correctly repeated the old, old blessing over the lights.

Hannah felt that wonders would never cease when Joe Toleman read a short Kiddush service, in English, of course, but with the air of a man who is used to at least a short service at his table on Sabbath eve. Miss Frank longed to ask questions, but tactfully waited until the maid disappeared after serving the soup, when Mrs. Toleman with characteristic impatience forestalled her.

"It's all Miriam's fault," she explained. "I know you're dying to know how it all happened when we used to be so terrible back home. Well," flushing a little, "I was wild when my boy told me he was engaged to marry a girl he'd met on one of his buying trips. He said her parents were foreigners and awfully religious; I thought they must be the sort of Jews I was brought up to make fun of. But I was sort of relieved, too; he wasn't at all Jewish himself and he'd been going with gentiles all his life and I was afraid he'd marry one of 'em.

"Well, you just ought to know Miriam! She's a college graduate and awfully up to date, but she's religious, too. She wouldn't come here to live until we had what she calls a Jewish home—Friday night and all that sort of thing. And she made me learn that blessing because she said she didn't feel right saying it here when it was my home. Well," smiling, "we're awfully anxious to please her; especially now when there's a baby coming in the spring. And I know Miriam's going to bring it up a good Jew—she'll have so much to give it."

A SUCCOTH TABLE

How Customs and Furniture Grow Old-Fashioned

O. HENRY—so runs one of the many legends of that prince of story writers—once declared that he could spin a yarn about any object under the sun. His friend laughingly flipped a menu card across the restaurant table. O. Henry immediately accepted the challenge and at once turned out the tale of the girl who typed menu sheets for a cheap New York restaurant. A legend which I recalled when we passed a rather pretentious bungalow on our street last summer and my companion pointed out a table upon the porch.

"If you can write one of your sob-stories about that horror with the carved legs and the oilcloth covering" —he challenged.

"Sob-stuff—nonsense!" I retorted. "I never write sob-sister stuff unless I have to. And this time I don't. For I sense a perfectly matter-of-fact, every-day story in that old piece of furniture. And I'll write it the minute we get back from our swim."

Which I did. You may read it if you want to—for it isn't sob-stuff.

. . . . . .

In a little town in Poland—the feet of opposing armies have long since ground it into the earth, so why trouble to find out its name?—a wedding was always a time for great rejoicing. These poverty-bitten Jews had few enough festivities and little chance for merri-

ment. So whenever the maimed or the deformed married, or a poverty-stricken young couple who immediately went to live with the bride's equally poverty-stricken parents, there was much gayety and rejoicing and good wishes. While such a marriage as that of young Raphael and Malka, the innkeeper's daughter, the groom a scholar of promise, the bride with a dowry almost as attractive as her face, was an occasion for double rejoicing. "Massel tov!" cried the guests and for once they expected all their pious wishes for the fortunate pair to be fulfilled.

When Raphael and his bride came to America a few years later, the girl-wife soon learned that it was one thing to be the petted, only daughter of the richest man in the community, another to try to make ends meet on the wages of a pants-operator. Raphael, for all his reputation for Talmudic learning, was something of a schlemiel in the ways of the world, and often his growing family went hungry to bed. It was during this period, when the third baby was cutting its teeth and fretting a good deal over the process, that he bought the kitchen table.

Malka shrieked with rage when she saw it, for it filled a good half of the dingy kitchen in their east-side tenement, and there was no space for it in any of the other three rooms.

"Didn't I tell you just a small table to stick in a corner and cut my noodles on and maybe we eat together on it on Shabbas? A table like that is big enough for a family of ten children, God forbid, and people who live in those big stone houses on the Avenue."

"In time we may be blessed with ten children and

then it will not be too small," answered Raphael the philosopher. "And in time I will be a rich man and we will live in a grand house on the Avenue and have room for a dozen big tables if we want them. Besides, I got this one very cheap—for the price of a little table—so why should I take a little one? And see the grand carving on the legs."

"May your legs be twisted like those for a hundred years," muttered his wife spitefully. But she ceased arguing for she knew that under her husband's gentle demeanor was an iron stubbornness. The Talmud scholar had a tenacity of purpose which with his intellect should have brought him plenty of material rewards; but since he was cursed with a certain fine idealism, a dreamy mysticism, he came dangerously close to dying a poor man.

Perhaps the years of their poverty up in their tenement kitchen were the happiest the couple were ever to experience. To be sure, Malka's tongue sharpened as her figure lost its pretty slimness and her skin coarsened; Raphael's shoulders stooped and he more than once felt the prick of wounded pride as his wit showed itself less keen than of old, when on Saturday afternoons he indulged in long Talmudic discussions with certain cronies of his in the little synagogue around the corner. Sometimes there was only bread and herring to eat, not infrequently, during strike times, only bread. One baby died, but the other five thrived and grew as fat and rosy as though they had been reared in a nursery on that mystical street called the Avenue. It was a happy home although never a luxurious one.

Perhaps at no time happier than on the Jewish festivals when the family gathered about the long table

with its quaintly carved legs, the legs now sadly defaced by Bennie's first pocket knife and the baby's teeth when Malka had mislaid its teething ring. On these festal occasions Malka brought out one of the treasured bits of linen she had brought over from "home" along with her two feather beds; the festive board was piled high with viands sometimes unknown from one yomtov to the next: shalets which made your mouth water just to smell them, soup and fowl and fish. Especially on Succoth when Raphael and his boys built a little lean-to on the roof, which, the weather permitting, served as a dining room for eight blessed days.

There was never such a Succah, the children decided, gay with autumn leaves plucked on the outskirts of Bronx Park, whither they always journeyed as part of their Succoth pilgrimage, and fruits from the corner grocery which in strike times were merely rented for the occasion, since Raphael couldn't buy oranges at eight cents apiece when he couldn't afford milk for his famished brood. Yes, it was a merry group that gathered in the Succah, where rye bread and butter tasted like ambrosia because of the novel surroundings, a group which had expanded so rapidly that Malka no longer grumbled that the table was too large.

Came a Succoth when Raphael and his wife missed two faces as the family gathered about the long table in the Succah the old gentleman had erected in the back yard. For by this time Bennie, once the bad boy of the family, had developed into a prosperous cloak and suit manufacturer, while his sister Rosie had made a marriage which caused their mother almost to purr whenever she thought about it. The other children were doing nicely, too, so Raphael was lifted almost

bodily out of his tailor-shop and Malka out of her kitchen; the flat in lower Harlem gave way to a neat little cottage in the suburbs; Max, the youngest brother and unmarried, still lived at home and commuted.

To do the children justice, they did not break the old home ties wantonly; they were all busy, self-interested folks, but still they usually found time to pay an occasional visit to the parents they supported, especially upon the Jewish holy days. But on this Succoth, Louie, the young doctor, was studying in Europe, and Esther, the baby sister, was too absorbed in one or another artists' ball to be given near her Greenwich Village studio, to come home for the festival. The old folks said nothing before the other children; but when they were alone that night Malka shed a few bitter tears.

"We will never all be together again," she mourned.

"Nu," said her husband, philosophically, trying to jest as he always did when most moved, "nu, maybe you were right, Malka, and that table is going to be too big after all."

Malka's tearful prophecy was a true one. During the year first one, then another of the children found some valid reason for being absent from the holiday gatherings. One could not blame Minnie for saying she couldn't bring the baby out on the train for Chanukah and didn't dare to leave it behind; a dinner for some out-of-town buyers kept Bennie away on Purim; and Leonard's wife insisted upon running up to Atlantic City for the Easter vacation, so he couldn't be expected to fill his accustomed place at the Seder. . . . But they all managed to gather for their father's funeral a few weeks after Passover.

Malka was more lonely than even she herself guessed. The first hard years of her married life had done much to rob her marriage of any romance; the old man for whom she grieved was very far removed from the dreamy youth who had wooed her "at home" years ago. But during the growing loneliness of her later years when her children had drifted this way and that—and always away from her!—she had learned to lean upon this almost alien husband and look to him for sympathy. The children told each other that "mamma would never get over it."

But by Succoth she seemed more like her old self again. Maxie couldn't be depended upon to build the Succah, of course, but Malka with unexpected independence hired a local carpenter and supervised the job herself. She told Maxie rather shamefacedly that she had never been very religious herself, but that his poor papa selig had always insisted upon a Succah, and she thought they ought to keep on having one. She even ordered the trig little electric which Bennie had given her and went down to the market herself for the fruit and certain frills for the feast; which encouraged the children, for of late she had grown too listless to do her own marketing and they considered this a bad sign in mamma.

I promised not to write a sob-story, so I won't. The children came to the Succoth feast, every one of them, and Minnie even brought the one grandchild. None of the boys could read the Hebrew service which Raphael had always read for them, but they got along very nicely without it; and, although the laughter was sometimes a little forced and the singing of the old hymns dragged a trifle, they all agreed it had been a very suc-

cessful Succoth party. And Malka, sitting at the head of the long old-fashioned table, a crushed little figure in her new black silk, tried to agree with them.

The family never had a real reunion since. After Malka's death Maxie, who had waited patiently for his own happiness, married a delightful young woman whom even the fastidious Minnie forgave for not being a Jewess. Maxie's wife insisted upon a city apartment so the little house was sold along with all the furnishings except a few trifles which the young people kept for one reason or another, chiefly for sentiment.

"And I'll take the long table if nobody else wants it," announced Anna, the second daughter. "It won't bring anything at the sale, it's so old-fashioned, but it's just what I want on the porch out at our bungalow this summer for our card games on Saturday afternoons."

VIVIAN GETS A BOOKING

A Glimpse of Life and Love Behind the Scenes

MR. ABEL SCHWARTZ, turned fifty-odd years, rotund and jovial, leaned back in his swivel chair and surveyed the pair before him. He was holding court in the inner office of the "Schwartz Premier Booking Offices," a dingy little room off an elevator shaft made beautiful to his eyes at least by the myriad of pictures that hung upon the dingy walls. There were a few colored costume plates among them, but they were chiefly portraits of various stage beauties, many of them rather unadorned, some simpering over huge feather fans, some severely statuesque in high-backed armchairs, others posing giddily upon one toe in the midst of a dance. And most of them were signed with a variety of scrawls to the same purport, that the writers would always remain the most affectionate friends of that master in the art of booking vaudeville talent, Mr. Abel Schwartz.

Now he rubbed his pudgy hands, one of them decorated with a stone almost as large as the one twinkling from the folds of his maroon tie, and blinked amiably at the ladies before him. "I'm entirely at your service," he announced, employing his time-honored phrase. "You're thinking of going on the stage, ladies?"

Mrs. Werner shook her head in vigorous protest. She was a skinny, energetic little woman about Schwartz's own age, dressed in shiny black, with a last

year's hat, obviously home-constructed, perched upon her graying but luxuriant hair. Plainly nervous in her unaccustomed surroundings, her laugh sounded artificially shrill in the little room.

"I ain't never thought of such a thing for myself," she assured Schwartz in hasty self-depreciation, " 'cause I never did have any talent. But my Vivian here," with a tender nod for her companion, "Vivian's just born for the stage. All the neighbors said so when she wasn't any more'n seven and danced for the Red Men's lodge over in Brooklyn, where we lived, and wore a red, white and blue dress and gold stars around her head. She made a terrible hit, didn't you, Vivian?"

"Now, mamma!" Vivian chided her parent softly, in real or pretended embarrassment.

Schwartz surveyed the girl with a practiced eye; not more than eighteen at most, a skin so dazzling that even he resented her unnecessary make-up, soft dark hair and a boyish figure singularly graceful in the showy dress he characterized mercilessly as "nix for style." She had possibilities, he decided, if she had anything to put over and enough "pep" to hold her own against more experienced performers.

"So you think you can dance?" he asked the girl, not exactly unkindly, yet with businesslike curtness.

Her mother answered for her. "All the latest steps, Mr. Schwartz. Ballroom and fancy dancing and character things like the clog and an imitation of that Pavlowa woman doing the 'Butterfly.' She took three courses at the Excelsior Academy over in Brooklyn, where we live, and her teachers all say she ought to go on the stage. Professor Newton, the principal of the school, told us to come and see you about it—he

said you was one of the most reliable booking gentlemen in New York."

Schwartz acknowledged the compliment with a graceful nod; but he did not allow himself to share Vivian's mamma's enthusiasm too soon. "It ain't a good season for beginners," he began doubtfully. "It ain't never a good season for beginners in this business, anyhow. And this year with so many of the musical shows going busted, you got a lot of real high-class stars out of work and ready to do anything in vaudeville. Like that young fellow in the reception room, waiting for me," lowering his voice a trifle. "Notice him when you come in? Handsome as a collar ad, ain't he, and he's got brains in his feet, too. He says he was one of poor Vernon Castle's first pupils and I believe him. And that poor fellow's been hanging around here for almost a month trying to get a booking. Exceptional talent," forgetting that Mrs. Werner, not being a manager, was not likely to be moved by a list of the young man's accomplishments. "Eccentric dancing and straight stuff and he can sing a little, too, and do a monologue if he has to, when his partner changes her clothes. It's a shame a boy like that can't get a booking, but that shows you what you're up against in vaudeville nowadays, when the best headliners are pawning their diamonds and going out selling books to pay their board bills."

"It ain't a question of salary with us," Vivian's mother assured the booking agent. "We ain't what you call well-to-do, but Vivian's papa selig left me enough to open a boarding house over in Brooklyn; I've got every room full, and, though you know you don't get rich feeding people nowadays with everything

so high, I got a few Liberty Bonds in the bank and Vivian's my only child, and I'd rather let her use 'em now to get started with than have to wait for 'em until I'm dead." The generous parent paused for breath, then became alarmingly businesslike. "I'll give you what you say is right to start Vivian on the stage," she bargained. "How much do you want?"

Abel Schwartz shook his head. "It can't be done," he told her. "Rockefeller himself couldn't get on the big circuit with an act if he didn't have the right talent. Talent's what counts, and I don't know whether your little girl has it or not. But maybe I can get her a try-out and see."

"I'll pay you whatever it's worth," repeated Mrs. Werner, blissfully unconscious of just what a try-out was. "And you tell me what she needs in clothes. I'll make 'em myself. I used to be a dressmaker before I got married."

Abel restrained an artistic shudder. "I'll give you a card to a lady who sews for the profession and she'll fix up our little girl just right. And maybe we'd better risk a set of our own—something kind of rich, but refined—maybe, a scene in Italy or some place like that with a man singing to a woman in a gondola. They did that at the 'Capitol' once and it went over big. Do you sing?" turning abruptly to Vivian.

She flushed rosily under his sudden scrutiny. "Not much," she confessed. "I can carry a tune, but the high notes——"

"You can talk your songs then. Lots of headliners does and people like 'em better for it. Are you good at funny monologues—telling jokes, you know?"

Vivian shook her head, ashamed of her lack of ac-

complishments. "But I can do awfully nice cartwheels along with my dancing," she added hopefully.

"I wonder—" the great man meditated ponderously. "I wonder if you couldn't go on with young Mortimer out there as the 'Eccentric Errols' or something. And do a lot of cartwheels in between and maybe fix up a kinda refined Apache dance for the two of you. Hey, Mortimer," raising his voice, "come in here; I got a proposition to talk over with you."

The proposition made to the young man "as handsome as a collar ad" was that he and Vivian should pool their talents and personal charms for at least one evening. Schwartz, for the regular fee to be paid by Mrs. Werner, who also promised to buy the Italian background and meet all other legitimate expenses, agreed to arrange for a try-out in one of the outlying theaters. An act full of eccentric dancing, monologues by Mortimer and Vivian's famed Butterfly Dance (upon which her mother insisted), would undoubtedly win the favor of some monarch of the big circuit and result in at least eight months' solid booking for the accomplished pair. So Mrs. Werner departed in high feather, the card of the lady who sewed for the profession clasped in one of her shabbily gloved hands; Vivian followed her, shy, uncertain, as demure as though she had never heard of a cartwheel or a clog dance in her life; while Mortimer remained behind for a final word with Schwartz.

"She ain't bad looking," conceded the collar ad gentleman, "after we put her in the right clothes. But do you think she can dance? And has she got personality? Personality's what counts on the stage and don't you forget it. Why, when I was out on the Van

Loan circuit last year in that skit with Mabel Burnside, didn't Tom Blenker, the author, write me and thank me for acting in it? Would you believe me? Them were his very words: 'My boy, you got the personality all right. I thank you for acting in my act.' "

Schwartz, who was accustomed to dealing with geniuses, enthusiastic over their own talents, seemed mildly impressed. "I ain't saying a word against personality," he returned. "But if I was you, Morty, I'd stop talking about personality stuff so much and go on a diet and try a little reducing. Personality's all right in its place, but in dancing it's legs that counts and you're going to lose yours if you're not careful and then where'll you be!" Which argument Morty found unanswerable.

If business had not taken Abel Schwartz to Brooklyn that Sunday morning, he would never have accepted Mrs. Werner's almost passionate invitation that he drop in for dinner some time to look over dear Vivian's new dancing dresses and talk over her act. Schwartz, like not a few New Yorkers, thought of Brooklyn as a place far too remote to tempt a hurried traveler; but the theater where Vivian and Morty were to make their début as the "Two Whirling Whartons," happened to be in that isolated spot, and Schwartz, cursing freely at the subway service, went forth to meet his manager. But he felt himself repaid for the trip as he gorged himself upon the delicacies of Mrs. Werner's Sunday noon table, from noodle soup to shalet.

"You won't believe it," he told the widow when he took his hat several hours later and prepared to bid her good-by, "you won't believe it, but the tears stood in my eyes when I ate your apple shalet. It made me

think of my mamma selig and how she used to cook things I liked. Nobody thinks of me like her since she died. I never married while she was alive; I had a good home and it would have broke her heart if I'd married a shicksa, and I got too much sense to make some nice little Jewish girl like your Vivian unhappy. And since she's gone I've been taking my meals at restaurants all the time and it's hard on a man brought up like I was. I can't get used to goyisha cooking. It takes a Jew to cook for a Jew. I go to the best places in town and it hurts me often the size check the waiter gives me when I get through, but I got to eat to keep up my strength, don't I, even if it tastes all the same, and I'm ruining my poor stomach for my old age. Your son-in-law's got it lucky, whoever he is, with you waiting to cook for him, Mrs. Werner!"

Mrs. Werner gave a gasp of horror as she glanced into the old-fashioned, high-ceilinged parlor where Vivian sat entertaining several very young and very attentive callers. "Don't beschrei the girl, Mr. Schwartz," she pleaded. "Don't say the word son-in-law to me. I've had a hard time all my life, dressmaking and keeping boarders and giving my Vivian private dancing lessons. It ain't been easy and I don't want my poor little girl to get married and go through what I did. All my life I've wanted to dance or paint pictures or go on the stage or something; and I ain't ever had a chance. But Vivian's going to. She and that Mr. Morty you picked for us is going to be a great hit, and if she's got sense enough to keep from getting married, there's no telling where she'll land, is there, Mr. Schwartz?" In her eagerness she leaned toward

him, placing a worn, needle-scarred hand upon the man's arm.

"Mrs. Werner," he assured her solemnly, and although he was no longer eating his shalet, his eyes filled with tears, "Mrs. Werner, you're a good woman. Like my poor mamma selig. I didn't know your kind was living any more. I'll do my best for your little girl and if she ain't an A number 1 success, it ain't going to be my fault."

"You're sure she'll be a hit?"

"I ain't sure of nothing in my business," he told her. "You show me a man, Mrs. Werner, who says he knows for certain what's going to go and what's not going to go on Broadway, and I'll show you a liar. You can't tell, Mrs. Werner; even with the best intentions and the best backings in the world, you can't tell."

At least you couldn't tell with Vivian! Her try-out, while not a sensational success, was anything but a failure. Dressed in demure white muslin and pink rosebuds by the lady who knew the good points of her fair customers of the profession, she sang several sentimental ballads in her untrained, pretty voice, and gave her Butterfly Dance as an encore; in a dashing dress of black and yellow she did certain wild and eccentric steps with the impassive Morty, their climax being a dance which was as Italian as it was anything else, executed against Schwartz's pet Venetian backdrop, just as effective as though he had not picked it up second-hand. In all, theirs was a varied offering, which, with Morty's swift legs and Vivian's unspoiled youth, was good enough to draw considerable applause, and the suggestion from a visiting manager that they should call on him next day. Yes, he might be able to place

that couple, he told Abel, but they'd sure have to tone their act up a lot before he'd touch it.

About six o'clock the next evening, Mrs. Werner wiped her floury hands on her apron and almost flew into the parlor where Abel Schwartz sat, his fat face aglow with good humor, a contract for the Whirling Whartons in his breast pocket. But his good news had to wait, for the lady almost threw herself into his arms and poured forth a stream of unintelligible details—"Vivian—sent her to have her nails manicured—slipped out with her new suitcase—how I slaved for that girl—a messenger boy brought this—" and she thrust a paper into his hand.

Schwartz scowled. "I always knew that damned Morty was too good looking for his own good," he muttered. "A nice girl like your Vivian to run off with a goy who ought to be cleaning windows instead of dancing fox trots!"

"It ain't a goy—it ain't Mr. Mortimer," sobbed Mrs. Werner. "You just read her letter."

Schwartz opened the letter; as he ran over the delicately written lines there was no sound in the old-fashioned parlor but the ticking of the black clock with gilt trimmings and Mrs. Werner's heart-broken sobbing.

"Dear mamma," wrote Vivian, "I don't want to go on the stage. I always told you I didn't want to. And Max Cohen has been going on perfectly awful. I met him this afternoon when I came out of the manager's office. Max saw my act last night and he says he won't let me keep on dancing with Mr. Mortimer—he's too good looking and you know how terrible jealous Max always is. He says he won't keep engaged to

me any more if I go on the road and dance and sing and everything with another man right in front of everybody. I never told you I was engaged to Max, mamma, 'cause I knew you'd scold me. But now he's afraid I'll make such a success on the stage I won't never want to marry him; and he says he's going to kill himself. We're going to be married this afternoon and Max is going to get a raise soon, so everything will be all right. And I'm sorry not to make a hit when you and Mr. Schwartz and Mr. Mortimer all tried to help me get a good booking, but I love Max, and mamma, love is the only thing in the world."

Schwartz folded the paper with a sigh. "She's got it easy yet to talk about love," he murmured, "after all you sunk in scenery and costumes, Mrs. Werner!" He patted her shaking shoulder. "Never mind—maybe we can get a little on 'em second-hand. And I ain't going to charge you a agent's fee, neither. I wouldn't worry about Miss Vivian. She's booked for life and it ain't your fault if she's picked out a bum circuit and the wrong dancing partner. Nope, it ain't your fault."

He stopped in the midst of his condolences to sniff the air like a hungry terrier. "Smells like you got something grossartig for supper," he hinted shamelessly.

Mrs. Werner dried her eyes. "Coffee kuchen I was just putting in the stove when you come," she explained. "And maybe you'll stay for supper. I want somebody lively like you at the table so the boarders won't notice I got red eyes, and ask me too much about Vivian. And we got Wiener schnitzel and stewed tomatoes."

Mr. Schwartz's eyes gleamed with appreciation.

"For a meal like that I'd stay and joke every darn boarder in Brooklyn," he promised, never dreaming how soon he would make good his boast. For the little winged god was at that very moment floating unseen through the old-fashioned parlor, wafted upon the spicy fragrance from the kitchen, which stole so persuasively to Schwartz's hungry bachelor heart. Mrs. Werner had lost a daughter; but she was to gain a husband.

MORE THAN BREAD

All About an Amateur Social Worker and the Movies

OF course, everybody at the office teased me about it, and said I'm too kind-hearted to be a social worker. Which is all nonsense. If we workers who see how terribly hard it is for poor people to get along don't sympathize with them, I don't know who should. And I never saw anything very funny in bringing the cat I found those bad boys teasing, into our office and feeding it up and giving it a nice bath. Of course, it was always having kittens, which was a nuisance as it was so hard to find them good homes that Miss Coem, our secretary, said we ought to open a branch of the Home Finding Society to look after them. And, maybe, I was too sympathetic when I raised a collection for that poor man who was almost sent to jail for stealing milk for his children. It turned out he didn't have any children at all, but he told me he was hungry enough to drink all the milk he stole, so I think he deserved some sympathy. My brother, who's doing fine in the movies, laughed himself sick and said he was going to get one of his scenario writers to work it up for a comic, and he'd give me the star part. Of course, he wasn't serious. Lots of people have told me I'd screen grand, but I'd much rather stay in social work where I can do a little good.

But I don't think I ought to be teased about "Grandma Levine"—she's kind of sacred, if you know

what I mean. We called her "Grandma" from the beginning; she looked just like one of those old women you see in the movies, being chased by the Indians or the English or somebody when they used to burn up the villages, houses and early settlers and everybody. She had a black silk handkerchief over her head and wore a big shawl, black with awfully pretty red flowers embroidered in it, and sort of flappy shoes. She was what my brother in the movies calls a "lovely type" and I was terribly sorry for her.

It all came about like this: She came into our office several times one day, but wouldn't speak to a soul. She told them she wanted to wait and tell her troubles to the lady with the nice curly hair and pretty smile. Miss Coem, whose hair is as straight as a string and who wouldn't smile even if you raised her salary (which she certainly deserves, 'cause she's held down her job for the last nine years with two weeks' vacation in the summer, and not a day off for sickness between!), Miss Coem didn't like that very much, I guess, especially when she's jealous of my hair and insists it isn't natural. When all I do is wet it and run a comb through it and——

Anyhow, Miss Coem always says she knows the cases would rather have me tend to them because I'm easier to impose on than she is; maybe she's right. But I don't think she'd waste any money or time, either, if she tried smiling once in a while when she was filling out blanks, or got herself a permanent hair wave!

So when I got in around five o'clock after spending almost all afternoon trying to get that Dembitz boy in a hospital where he could eat kosher, account of

his father who was terribly religious, though his mother didn't care as long as he got well, anyhow, when I got back to the office there sat "Grandma Levine" waiting for me. As soon as I came in, she grabbed my hand and began a regular stream of Yiddish about seeing me come in and out of the office, and knowing I had a good heart, and would I help keep a poor old Jewish mother out of the cemetery a little longer?

I didn't understand half of what she said, of course; she spoke so fast and I've forgotten a lot of my high school German which I never got very well, anyhow; besides, I don't see much use in learning a lot of foreign languages till you go to Europe and may have to speak them. But I had Miss Coem interpret for me and made her stay around in case I didn't get the story just right. You see, I'm pretty careful now and don't depend on my German like I used to when I came into the work last year and tried to speak and understand Yiddish just as though I was used to it. 'Cause I had an awfully narrow escape: I had to go to a barber shop to tell the owner that if he didn't support his wife we'd put him in jail. And I kept calling him "Herr," because I believe it's better to be polite to people even if you are threatening them. He was a little deaf, and anyhow, seeing a lady in a barber shop, he thought I came in to have my hair bobbed, as so many girls were doing then, and tried to push me in the barber chair and put a sheet on me. Wasn't that awful? My brother nearly died laughing over it, and he said he was going to star me in a film called "Beckela Bobs Her Hair," or something like that. But that was all a joke; I haven't any intention of acting in the

movies, although my brother's partner says I'd film grand and he's in a position to know.

Anyhow, with Miss Coem's help, I managed to make out the poor old thing's story. I was crying like a baby when she got through with it; sometimes I think I'm too kind-hearted to do social work, because I always feel everybody's troubles as though they were my own. Even Miss Coem looked touched and had to wipe her eyes. It would have made a beautiful magazine story, just the way she told it, and I would like to write it up if I wasn't so busy with social work and a hundred and one other things just now. When I was in high school my English teachers were always giving me *A* on my themes and telling me I ought to write for the magazines.

Poor old Mrs. Levine was having a dreadful time, she said. She came to this country just a few months ago to live with her married son and his family. He had too many children—those kind of people always have!—and they were all crowded together in three little rooms and the landlord threatened to evict them and everything. And he was the last of all her children; her daughter ran away with a Gentile and her two older boys got killed in the war or something. It was really terrible.

And then this son got killed in an accident a few weeks before. She was awfully vague about it, but she cried so hard when she was telling what it meant for a mother to bury her son instead of having him say Kaddish for her, that I made Miss Coem stop asking her whether the widow could collect any damages. Sometimes I think Miss Coem has been in social work too long and it's hardened her. I wish she'd get some-

thing to do that would make her a little more sympathetic. And now the family was just about starving. The oldest boy sold papers, she said, and her daughter-in-law sometimes went out working by the day, but she couldn't do much because she was sickly and still nursing her baby. She said the baby was over a year old and I made her promise to tell her daughter-in-law to wean it quick. Those people oughtn't to be allowed to have children unless they know how to take care of them. But, as Miss Coem says, you can't pass laws for everything.

So the family were actually starving—living on bread and weak tea and sometimes only tea. Wasn't that pitiful? I was awfully tired, and I had a date for the theater that evening, too, but I was all ready to go back with Mrs. Levine and investigate and see what we could do for the family. But she wouldn't let me. She told me with tears in her eyes she'd been watching me for several days and knew how kind-hearted I was, just to look at me, and that's why she finally got enough courage to come in and see me.

But her daughter-in-law was awfully proud, she said, and would just about kill her if she knew that old Mrs. Levine was asking for charity. "She'd break my neck," was her very expression; but these people exaggerate so, I didn't believe her daughter-in-law would really be violent. Anyhow, she didn't want young Mrs. Levine to know that we knew their troubles.

But I finally persuaded her to take a five-dollar bill —I gave it out of my own pocket, so I don't see why Miss Coem had to act so uppish afterwards and tell me she'd advised me against it!—and she said she'd tell her daughter-in-law she'd met a landsmann who made

her take it just for a loan. And she said she'd buy food and coal and milk for the baby and she knew God would get both of us nice husbands for helping a poor old Jewish mother who hadn't long to live and did want to have a piece of herring for supper once in a while before she died, and a roof over her head. She cried when she said it, and tried to kiss my hand. And then she went home, and Miss Coem went on with her reports, working overtime as usual, and I had to run to the subway to dress for my date, and then I came a half hour late to the theater as it was. But I never mind putting myself out if it's in a good cause, as I told my brother's partner who took me. And he was quite impressed when I told him how when the poor old thing kissed my hand, she said, "Lady, what you give me is better than bread." I supposed she meant a kind word along with the money was worth more than bread to her, but you can't make Miss Coem see things that way. She never realizes how much a little sympathy means to these people.

Well, about two weeks later, who should come into our office but a woman who said she was old Mrs. Levine's daughter-in-law. A very respectable-looking woman even if her clothes were awfully old-fashioned; but they were nice and neat and she had good shoes on and her hair was nicely combed. I always notice such details—they help you so in your work! And she said she had come to have us help her find "Grandma Levine!"

She said she was an awfully busy woman herself, and her two daughters were always running out nights, and her husband came home from work too tired to do anything but read the paper and go to bed. He was a

plumber—and you know what good wages they get—and wasn't ever in any accident she'd ever heard of—and she hadn't had a nursing baby for years and didn't want one, either—or a son to sell newspapers; and she guessed her mother-in-law must be crazy to tell such stories about her. They always supposed the old lady went to bed right after supper while young Mrs. Levine was doing the dishes; but last night she went into her room for something and—the old lady wasn't there. And she hadn't come home, either. Mrs. Levine said she didn't like to tell the police if she could help it, and her husband thought, maybe, we could help trace her without anybody knowing anything about it.

Miss Coem—who ought to be a detective—found Grandma Levine over in a police station in Brooklyn. She wouldn't tell them her name or anything, so they couldn't send her home. It was an awfully funny story when we got it all out of her; my brother's partner nearly died laughing when I told him, but he said he wouldn't dare put it in the movies—nobody would believe it. But it really happened just as old Lady Levine told it to Miss Coem, who translated it to me. I wrote it all down in my notebook; maybe I'll write her up some day if I ever get time.

"Ladies, I couldn't help it. Coming across the ocean I hear people on the boat talking about the 'movies,' the 'movies,' and I never seen none before in my whole life. I'm a poor old woman, ladies, and I haven't got so long to live any more, and I want to see just one movie before I die. My son and his wife and his girls, they ain't so bad to me. They give me my rolls and coffee in the morning no matter what time I get up, and maybe a piece of salmon. I got a good bed and

blankets and a nice white spread, and his wife made over an old dress of hers for me to wear to schul on Shabbas if I wanted to go sometimes. But it ain't always Shabbas and I get tired of schul. I go to schul all my life but never once to a movie. I tell my son about it and he laughs and says he's too tired; and my daughter-in-law never goes out no place. She is a terrible woman; she works all day and all night she knits sweaters; she says the movies give her a headache and she won't go with me. And the two girls run out with their young men all the time and they won't bother with me. And when I say, 'For God's sake, give me a little money, and let me go alone,' they say, 'You'll get lost. But some day we'll take you to a show, maybe.' But they don't—and I want to see one movie before I die.

"The lady with the curly hair's got a good heart and she gives me the money. I didn't tell her no lie; it was more than bread to me. And every night when my daughter-in-law washed her dishes I ran out the back way and got a soda by the drug store and went to the movie show on the corner. I used to stay through the show twice. I couldn't read the writing and I didn't understand all the pictures, but I was seeing a movie and that was all I wanted.

"One night a picture stopped right in the middle. A nice Yiddish woman sat next to me and she said, when I asked her, the picture didn't run all at once—a different part every night at a different theater. It was the 'Pet of Broadway'—a grand picture. She said she was going over to Brooklyn to see the next part; she read in her Jewish paper where it played. And she would take me with her. I got almost a dollar left

so I go; I thought, maybe, it would take me as far as Brooklyn and pay for my ticket to the show. But when I get out of the show in Brooklyn I lost her in the crowd and couldn't find a street car. And I wouldn't tell no one where I lived; I didn't want my son to know and scold me. And now he will watch me all the time and won't let me go to the movies no more."

Of course, Mr. Levine, who isn't at all bad for a plumber, promised to see that his mother got to the movies at least twice a week with a neighbor child to look after her. But that isn't the best of it: my brother and his partner called for me the day she came to the office to thank me for fixing things up for her, and they think she's just the type they want for the old immigrant woman in their new feature film, "The Pearl of Ellis Island." She's going to be the heroine's old mother, and they're spending a lot of money on it, and they expect it to have a much longer run than "Humoresque" or "The Golem," and all those other Jewish films.

Grandma Levine is going all over the neighborhood now, telling everybody she is going to act in the movies. Even her granddaughters make a fuss of her on account of it and her son's promised the night the film's released he'll take her and the whole family to see it. I'd like to be there myself to see the poor old thing's face when she sees herself on the screen. Of course, it isn't a big part. My brother says she's got the real stuff—she's a regular Yiddish actor—and he's afraid she's too true to life for much of a part on the screen. But she comes down the gangplank and kisses her daughter, and in one scene she sits on the ground and mourns for her when they all think she's run off to marry the vil-

lain. It's awfully touching and I cried a lot when I saw it run off in the projection room, or whatever they call it. I guess Miss Coem's right—I'm too tender-hearted to be in social work.

That's one of the reasons I won't be around for the first showing of "The Pearl of Ellis Island." I'm dropping my work and I'm going to marry my brother's partner, and we'll be spending our honeymoon in the Bermudas by that time. But if I ever get around to it I'll write up Grandma Levine's story and send it to some magazine. My high school teachers always told me I could write!

THE TWO-EDGED SWORD

A Tale of the Time of the Maccabees

MEN tell many tales of Judas the Maccabee, that lion of God, many stories of his light-hearted daring, his purity of heart and love for Israel. But few know how he wooed and won the maid Helen, golden-haired captive of the enemy, only to lose her in the end.

In the early days of the struggle against Antiochus, tyrant over Israel, Judas Maccabeus met the Syrian general Apollonius in battle. The Lord was on his side, and though his troops were new in warfare, Judas won a great triumph; the heathen were either slain in battle or saved their lives in flight, for they were sorely afraid seeing that Apollonius, their captain, had fallen. But the men of Judas were filled with new courage upon that day; they rejoiced in their own strength and the strength of Judas, their captain; and Judas took from the dead hand of Apollonius his great two-edged sword in token of his victory. This was the sword that Judas the Maccabee ever afterwards carried as long as he did battle for Israel, and it was this sword he still held when in the last days he fell fighting upon the battle-field.

Now this victory over Apollonius was but the first of many which Judas the Hammer won over the enemies of Israel. Although at first his men were untried for battle, hungry and ragged, some without helmets

and others without spears, still he triumphed over the trained warriors Antiochus sent against him. For the Lord was on his side and Judas was a mighty man of valor. Moreover, the enemy fought in a strange land, but to Judas, bred in the hills about Modin, the mountains of his home land were as well known to him as the features of his beloved. And since he fought also to avenge her, Helen, whom the Syrians held captive, he fought with the strength of King David in the olden days.

As a boy in Modin, Judas had loved his cousin Miriam, a bright-haired little maid who laughed at his clumsy wooing but loved him none the less. And he dreamed even then of wedding her and taking her to his father's house as his wife. But that was in the days before Antiochus began to trouble all Israel and a true man dared have no wife but the sword.

Among those whom the Syrians took captive when they swept over the land like an army of devouring locusts were the wife and daughters of Judas's uncle. In the fastness of the hills about Modin he often thought of her, bright-haired Miriam, a captive in the hands of the enemy. So that when he fought, Judas waged war not alone for the glory of God and the freedom of Israel, but also in her name, seeking to rescue her or at least to avenge her death.

There is no need to tell of the Maccabee's battles, for they are written in the books which bear the name of Judas and his brothers, nor of the death of Antiochus, the mad king, passing away amid tortures more horrible than those he devised for Israel's martyrs. But no man has set down the tale of his meeting with Miriam, the golden-haired Jewish maiden, whom

the Greeks called Helen, and how he lost her in the end.

It was in the household of Nicanor that Judas met her the day he came to make a treaty of peace with the new governor over Judea. They say that Demetrius, the king, had sent Nicanor to Jerusalem to overcome Judas the Maccabee by force of arms; but that Nicanor, seeing him, loved him as his own brother, and prayed to his own gods that there should be peace between them. And, although at first Judas feared the heathen general's craft, he soon gave him his trust, glad to have peace for the land was weary of warfare.

So Judas came often to the house of Nicanor at Jerusalem, not only because the governor was his friend, but to see Miriam whom the Greeks called Helen. For at the beginning of the war, the soldiers of the king had carried away many women and children into captivity. Miriam and her sisters had been taken into the household of Nicanor, where they found their lot pleasant, serving his wife, a gentle mistress, disposed to deal kindly with the Jewish captives. Miriam's rare beauty had won her many privileges and when under the gentle compulsion of those she served, she adopted the Grecian dress and customs and changed her name to Helen, she was treated less as a servant than a daughter of the household. And her desertion of the ways of her fathers troubled her but little, for in those days many deserted the faith and it was a hard thing to remain a Jewess.

But when Helen met Judas after their long separation she hated herself for her disloyalty to her people and vowed that should she be tested again she would

show herself true-hearted and loyal even as Judas and his brethren had been.

"It was so easy to follow the ways of the Greeks," she told Judas one evening as they sat together in the gardens about Nicanor's house at Jerusalem. "My father has always loved the ways of the Grecians, and when these people were kind to me—" She clung to him with sudden passion. "My Judas, when will you take me away from this house? I cannot be a Jewess here in the home of Nicanor. But when we dwell together——"

"I dare not take a wife in these uncertain times," Judas told her, finding it hard to speak calmly for he loved her exceedingly and longed to listen to her pleading. "Now there seems to be good will and trust between Syria and Judea; Nicanor is my friend and I trust him. Yet there are too many Judeans among us who are restless and unsatisfied. To satisfy their lust for power they may seek to sow dissension between the court and us who try to be faithful subjects of the king as long as he allows us to worship the God of our fathers. And should these trouble-makers again force our necks under the yoke, we who would keep the faith must be ready to defend our rights even with our lives."

He dropped her hand and his brown fingers tightened about his sword-hilt. Helen's eyes glanced along the richly ornamented sheath and she shuddered. For she knew that it was the two-edged sword of Apollonius he carried, the sword he had taken from the corpse of his terrible enemy; she was frightened to think of Judas whom she loved for his tenderness, no longer

her lover, but the heroic leader, terrible as a lion upon the battlefield.

But Judas laughed and kissed her. "Fear not," he said, "for perhaps I am over-zealous and see a sword in every hand—although my former enemies offer me gifts and friendship. Let us wait but a month longer —or at most two. Then if there seems to be a lasting peace for Judea, I shall bring you to my house as my bride, and the pain of our long parting will be wiped away in our love." Thus spoke the lion of Israel; he never dreamed how soon he was to learn that for him there could never be peace or fulfillment until he slept with his fathers, his battles over at last.

For even at that moment, Alcimus, that false priest in Israel, was pouring lying tales into the king's ears, saying that Nicanor was playing the part of a traitor to his master, that he secretly aided Judas in his plans, and hoped to place him upon the throne in the king's stead. All this Alcimus treacherously told King Demetrius, and Demetrius listened willingly, right glad to hear evil reports of the hated Judeans. So he sent urgent letters to his governor, Nicanor, accusing him because of his friendship for Judas, begging him at once to send Judas the Maccabee in chains to the royal court at Antioch.

Helen heard of the matter, for she was treated as a daughter of the house of Nicanor, and she learned also how the great captain shrank from betraying his friend, yet dared not face the anger of his king. And when she pleaded with Nicanor, begging him to defend Judas, he would promise her nothing; he only threatened her should she betray what she had learned to her lover.

The two met for the last time in the gardens of Nicanor and Helen broke down utterly and wept when she told Judas of the king's decree. "I am betraying Nicanor who has always been more than a father to me," she said, "but I cannot see you come to harm. Come no more to this place and no longer seek Nicanor in friendship. For after a bitter struggle with himself he has determined to send you a prisoner to the king."

Judas's face grew white in the moonlight as he listened. "I do not believe you," he said harshly. "Nicanor is my true friend and you for some strange reason seek to breed hatred between us. I would have been as likely to give over my father's white head to the enemy as Nicanor to betray me to the king. I cannot believe you."

She shrank a little but continued to plead with him. "I can give you proofs," she urged. "Go from this place while there is still time. And, if you have ever loved me, take me with you, for my life is not safe should Nicanor learn that I have betrayed his plans. And I do not care to live if I am forced to part from you again," and she clung to him, kissing his robes and hands as a suppliant might and humbling herself before him.

But Judas sprang to his feet, thrusting her aside. "I will seek Nicanor," he said quietly, "and learn the truth from his own lips."

She barred his path. "I will not let you go. He waits for you now—and there are others with him. There is a plot to overcome you and send you in chains to the king."

"I do not believe you," he told her again in the same quiet, hard tones. "So I will seek Nicanor,"

and he sought to pass her. But she clung to his robe and detained him.

"Have I ever lied to you before?" demanded the girl.

"No—but you acted a lie all the months when you pretended to be a Greek."

"I did it to save myself."

"Old Eleazer and the little children of Hannah did not think to save themselves," he answered harshly. "How do I know but that even now you are using me for a tool—seeking to set me against Nicanor, my friend, for some purpose of your own? But there will never be enmity between us for he is my heart's own brother. Nothing you can say or do will persuade me that there is treachery in his clean heart."

The woman who had once been Miriam stood before him very fair and white, the moonlight falling upon her golden hair and honey-colored robes. Her face contracted with pain at his words; then she grew suddenly calm.

"You will know that I am not lying when I prove that I am no longer afraid," she answered him clearly. "When I was a coward before, I clung to life in the hope that I might look upon your face again. But now I will not live to see you slain or dishonored." Leaping forward she seized the hilt of the great two-edged sword of Apollonius and drew it from its sheath. Judas gave a cry of horror, but he was too late. She fell at his feet, her life blood staining the honey-colored robes a deep crimson, her face quivering in the agony of death.

Judas threw himself beside her, seeking to staunch her wound, crying upon her to forgive him ere she

died. But she did not answer. At last he rose to his feet, his face very old and tired. Should he seek Nicanor now and ask him the cause of her sudden madness? Or for one evening at least might he cease to be the warrior and mourn the slain love of his youth?

Even as he hesitated he saw several armored men passing through the outer court and into the house of Nicanor. They wore the livery of the king's household and as they crossed the threshold one of them drew a scroll out of his girdle. Judas strained his ears to listen.

"Is your prisoner, Judas the Maccabee, ready?" asked the envoy of the king.

If Judas's heart broke at his friend's treachery he gave no sign. He only bent to kiss the bright hair of the woman who had once been his playmate among the spring-flushed hills of Modin. Then, with the two-edged sword of his dead enemy in his hand, he crept softly out of the moonlit gardens to fight anew the battles of his people and to avenge the death of the golden-haired maid whom the Greeks had once called Helen.

IN THE RABBI'S STUDY*

A Series of Thumb-nail Sketches

I. SCHNORRERS

AS soon as a new schnorrer strikes our little town, he hunts up the rabbi. You see, he labors under the delusion that the rabbi will be more sympathetic and less keen about unearthing unpleasant details than the average business man. But he forgets that the rabbi who has entertained the entire luckless brotherhood for years is somewhat hardened to their tales of misfortune, which usually exhibit a striking similarity, and has learned to sniff skeptically at even the most artistically colored down-and-out story which the wandering schnorrer passes to him across the study table.

Though I have to confess that I was almost convinced by the sad history Heimowitz told me last year. He was a big, lumbering man, with a fringe of coarse gray hair about his bald spot, a nose that was reassuringly Jewish, and one eye. It was pouring outside and a stream of water trickled sadly from his disgraceful shoes until it formed a pool around his chair; Heimowitz told me that he suffered from rheumatism, which made those wet boots even more pathetic. As he talked he twisted his greasy derby in his muscular, hairy hands; I noticed with a shock that two fingers were missing from the left hand.

* If desired, any one of these sketches may be omitted if a shorter reading is required.

"I just had enough money to bring me here," he told me. A bad beginning! I should have been warned as nine schnorrers out of ten always have just enough loose change to carry them to your town before they are thrown upon the mercy of a hard-hearted public. But Heimowitz held me fascinated with his one good eye and went on. "I am a peddler. I have a wife and four children living near Waukesha. We have our little home—all paid for—and a vegetable garden." His gloomy face brightened. "Some day, rabbi, you will come to Waukesha and I show you my garden. Honest to God, we raised enough last summer to feed us all winter." His face clouded. "But I can't make much money any more in Waukesha; the license is high and the other peddlers try to put me out of business. So I go traveling in the country. My horse dies just two days ago. I sell the wagon—a big loss, doctor—and I look for work. But I can't find any."

He pointed with his maimed hand to his injured eye. "I got this eye last winter; two holdup men near Waukesha. I have my money—you will excuse me, rabbi!—I have my money hid under my undershirt and they can't find it and they get mad and try to kill me. I half killed one of them," he ends complacently, "but the other one cut my hand and punched out my eye."

It is a brand new story and I am thrilled, but still remember that I am the official investigator for our charity committee and ask unmoved: "But why don't you go back to Waukesha?"

He shrugs hopelessly. "What is there for me till I get me a new horse and wagon? And my wife is

sick—she had a operation—and for six years now she can't eat white bread and no sugar. And the doctor bills! I want to get some work here, rabbi. I like the town. I ain't a regular schnorrer. God knows, I wouldn't ask it you should give me a ticket home on the railroad. I want I should stay here and earn a living and maybe make a little extra and send it home to my wife and children. And they have their garden. Once you should see our onions and radishes, doctor! Just give me a chance, rabbi. I don't want any money—I wouldn't take it. Just give me a few brooms—and maybe a half a dozen of nice dusters—and some mops—some oil mops, maybe. I ain't strong; I have rheumatism and asthma and my teeth are all bad. But I will work till I fall on my face. If you could get me the brooms from somebody in the congregation—it would be a mitzvah to let me have them at cost, rabbi, and I pay back when I can—if you could get me some brooms and mops and little dusters —I could make so much; perhaps, two dollars a day."

"Just selling brooms?"

He tried to hide his disgust for my ignorance. "I don't want money for my brooms. The ladies give me old shoes and pants and vests from their husbands. I sell the old clothes for good money. In a month I save enough to send money home to my wife—she don't pay no rent and we have our garden, thank God! —and she can take care of the children. You just get me the brooms, rabbi, and"—here he gave me a friendly wink with his one sound eye—"and I do the rest."

I got him the brooms although Frankenstein, our local Jewish hardware dealer, insisted upon a deposit

(from my pocket, of course!), growling that he wouldn't trust Heimowitz any further than he could see him. Which I considered unkind as Frankenstein is notoriously near-sighted. Then, finding that a large peddler's license was required, I actually put myself under lasting obligation to our city clerk to let Heimowitz wander about hawking brooms without paying the usual fee. It's more than likely that the official from whom I've never asked a single favor for myself will expect to be repaid with interest at the next election. But not from Heimowitz!

That gentleman received his brooms and thanked me with his one good eye full of tears; he even asked me to find him room and board with a respectable Jewish family, adding that he could eat very little on account of his stomach, but wanted that little to be kosher. Reformer rabbiners, he knew, never ate kosher, but he was only a poor, ignorant peddler who hoped to die a good Jew. With which parting slap he left me, brooms, oil mops and all, and I have never seen him since. Although he had been extremely anxious to learn when my Friday night services began. He said he wanted to hear me preach.

Now Heimowitz, according to his own appraisal, was just a plain business man; but Strausky, who called on me the next week, was an artiste—nay, a genius. He raved poetically of persecution in the various cities in which he played first violin "by Handelmann's Roof Garden—you know the place?" and Rudolph's "Little Café" and Grossman's Music Hall. Fellow musicians were always jealous of him—it was hard to find another place—but he had a friend in Cincinnati who conducted an orchestra. If I would only

send him there, Strausky urged, I would be saving an artiste from suicide and a fellow-Jew from death.

You may know that the National Conference of Jewish Charities have made the wise provision that the community which sends an improvident wanderer to the next stopping-off place will be held responsible for his welfare and support. So I refused to buy the desired ticket and suggested that our musician should linger about town while I found suitable work for him. He told me that was just what he wanted; honest work through the day, a little room where he might play his beloved violin at night, until he had saved enough to pay for a ticket to Cincinnati. He accepted my note to the local Employment Bureau with profound thanks, but failed to find the place. If you should meet him wandering about the country, a violin case in his hand, my second-best Prince Albert on his back, just tell him what I think of him.

So, you see, it's pretty hard to do the right thing by schnorrers. We tried to do our best for Heimowitz and Strausky—and a hundred others—but the one was a clever rogue and the other a common loafer. Cases like theirs are discouraging enough, but I always feel the most disheartened when I meet the man who really seems worth saving. For there are fellows like Bergman—perhaps the saddest case of its kind that I have ever encountered. He was a slim young chap with an empty trouser leg and moved as though his crutches hurt him. He spoke with the inflections and vocabulary of a college professor—and stopped me on the street corner to beg a quarter for a night's lodging. Up in my study we talked things over; the most hopeless part of it was that he saw as clearly as I did the

utter blackness of his future. Just a boy—he was twenty-four, he said, and looked even younger—a cripple, and afflicted with lung trouble, with no family, and as far as we could see, no way to earn his own living.

"I used to live in New York," he said, "newspaper work. But I couldn't move fast enough with these to keep up with the game." This with a half-humorous twitch toward his crutches. "I've been trying to do odd jobs along the way and get to Colorado. But tramping is rather a precarious existence for a man in my condition. I'm not going to tell you the usual thing you must hear from every beggar who drifts in here. It's no use saying that I'd do any sort of work—when I've scarcely the strength to pound a typewriter. And it's not very likely you could get me on one of your local papers. Maybe if I could get to Denver"—his eyes widened—"it would make a man of me. Think you could send me where I could begin all over again?"

We kept him in town while we wired back to verify his story. The people he had given as his references were slow in answering and when they wrote at last their reports hardly justified our helping the cripple on to Colorado. But he no longer needed our aid, for like most of the wanderers that perplex a small town charity committee he had "passed on." He died in the free ward of our hospital, babbling in his delirium of many things he had not cared to tell me in my study. Perhaps it was the easiest way to solve his problem; perhaps, although he never set out for Colorado, he found his opportunity to begin all over again.

II. The Second Generation

Oddly enough, whenever I hear hail rapping, rapping against the window pane, I think of that bleak day in early March when Joseph Cahn came to see me. He had brought his wife, or rather, she had brought him. Mrs. Cahn was a little, sharp-faced woman, shrewd of face and quick of tongue; a good housekeeper, said the ladies of my congregation, and an excellent mother to Joseph Cahn's four children since the death of his first wife when little Florence was hardly more than a baby. And now little Florence had grown into a pretty girl of twenty and her father was asking me to officiate at her wedding.

"I guess you've heard that Florrie's going to be married soon," began Joseph Cahn awkwardly. I nodded, feeling genuinely sorry for his embarrassment. For congregational gossip had informed me that Florence's fiancé, although an excellent young man, was a non-Jew; in fact, Frank Dawson's father was one of our most respected citizens and a deacon in the Methodist church. "She's going to be married," repeated Joe Cahn lamely, "and so I came to see you—"; his voice trailed off emptily, and Mrs. Cahn hastened to assist him.

"It's this way, doctor," she explained just a little too briskly. "I know you'll understand. Let me explain it to him, Joe," to her plainly self-conscious husband. Then to me: "I don't have to tell you, doctor, I feel just like a mother to Florrie—and I ought to be able to sympathize with her, too, my own parents being Methodists, and our marriage," with a side-long glance at her husband, "being such a congenial one. So when

Florrie decided to marry Mr. Dawson, I said to her, 'Florrie, we owe it to your dear father, when he's a trustee in your church and all that, to have you married by your own minister. I'm not against intermarriage,' I said, 'but I don't see any use of hurting people's feelings when you don't have to.' "

"And Miss Florence?" I asked. "Is she willing to have a Jewish wedding?"

"I think she will to please me," put in Mr. Cahn timidly, but Mrs. Cahn swept past him.

"She told me to come and talk to you," she explained. "She knows it will mean more to her father if she's married by a Jewish minister and Mr. Dawson's persuaded his people to come, anyhow, so everything will be just lovely." She beamed on me confidently and Joe Cahn looked up from the carpet with a sort of pathetic expectancy I hated to dispel. But I wanted to be rather sure of the situation before I committed myself further.

"It will be a Jewish wedding, won't it?" I asked slowly, because I wasn't just sure how to phrase my question. "Otherwise I'll be entirely out of place."

"A Jewish wedding?" Mrs. Cahn looked puzzled.

"I'm not demanding that the young man become a Jew," I went on. "Of course, I have my own views on intermarriage, but if Miss Florence is still Jewish enough to wish me to perform the ceremony, I'll do my part—if I can."

"I should like it." This very humbly from Joe Cahn.

"I am willing to make that concession; I shall not insist upon a conversion. But I cannot make any other concessions. If the young people want a rabbi at their

wedding, it must be a Jewish ceremony. They must live like Jews; their children must be reared as Jews."

"But—really should you demand so much?" fluttered Mrs. Cahn.

"I am not demanding anything. But unless this is a Jewish wedding," I repeated quietly, "it would be mockery for me to perform the ceremony, and you should have a Christian minister. Suppose you ask Miss Florence to come and see me. I'll explain my side of the case to her and then the young folks can decide for themselves."

"I'm sure she'll do anything you ask just to have you with us—it will please her father so," answered Mrs. Cahn, trying to speak confidently, but with what I felt was a rather uncertain inflection in her clipped tones.

The next day found Florence sitting in the leather arm chair beside my study table. She was a slight, dark little thing with decidedly Jewish features, disfigured by a sullen twisting of the mouth when I failed to see her side of the matter.

"But can't you see how it is?" she broke in pettishly. "I'm not Jewish and I don't want to be. Papa's not a good Jew either, or he wouldn't have married a gentile. Though she's been better to me than a lot of Jewish stepmothers might have been," she added half defiantly. "And now just because he's getting religious in his old age, and is a trustee or something in your Temple, he's spoiling everything by picking on Frank. Just because Frank's not a Jew. Anyhow, Frank's as much a Jew as I was brought up to be," she ended sullenly.

I had to remind her that I was not criticizing Frank

or his religious beliefs. In fact, I told her that I admired the young man's fine forbearance in allowing her to have a minister of her own faith to perform the wedding service. But I did insist that as a rabbi in Israel I would be sadly out of place unless her marriage were a Jewish one.

"Do you mean a wedding like those people downtown had last year?" she asked indignantly. "I couldn't expect Frank to put up with all those old-fashioned things, that canopy and all that Hebrew, which I couldn't understand either."

"It isn't the canopy or even the Hebrew which makes a Jewish wedding," I told her. "It would be very foolish for me to insist upon symbols which meant nothing to you or Mr. Dawson. But I can't read a Jewish wedding service which doesn't usher in a Jewish life lived in a Jewish home."

She began to understand and her dark, eager face flushed a little. "I don't know anything about a Jewish home," she confessed, and now there was no defiance in her voice. "I was just a baby when mamma died, you know. Anyhow," again resentful, "I know a lot of Jews whose homes are just like other people's. What's the difference, anyhow?"

"You will understand when children come," I told her gently. "What sort of a home will you have ready for them? Have you decided to send your children to your husband's church?"

"No—I promised papa—and Frank wouldn't expect it of me."

"Then your husband wouldn't object if you brought them up like Jews—at least sent them to our Sabbath

school? You know how that would please your father."

"I couldn't do that either. Frank's people wouldn't like it."

"Then will you have any religion in your home, I wonder?"

"I don't think so; but I don't see that it's anybody's affair but our own," growing more and more sullen.

"It's not my affair; but if you are going to found a home like that, I for one can't act the part of a hypocrite and perform a religious service for your marriage. If neither the Jewish nor the Christian religion mean anything to you and your husband, why don't you go to a justice of the peace and have a civil marriage ceremony? But why make a parody of my religion or the religion of my friend, the Methodist minister, by asking us to consecrate your two lives when you intend to turn your backs on the two of us forever?"

"I know what you mean," her voice no longer sullen. "But why should I bother about giving my children any religion when I never had any of my own after I was confirmed?" She rose to go, a wistful look in her dark eyes. "You should have got after me ten years ago; it's too late to do anything now." Her hand was on the knob; she turned to fling a last appeal over her shoulder. "It doesn't make a bit of difference to me, but it's going to hurt papa. I wish you could help to make it all a little more Jewish for his sake."

But it was my friend, the Methodist minister, who performed the ceremony.

III. The Battle of the Junkies

If ever I leave the rabbinate I expect to enter the junk business. Edelman and his brother junkies have called upon me so often during the past year to arbitrate their troubles that I feel I have an inside knowledge of the least understood profession in the world.

It all began when Edelman, his wife and four little Edelmans of assorted sizes, came to our town last winter. Mr. Edelman was ill and applied to our charity society for help, although he assured us that he was willing to work and his was not a case of charity. He was a buyer and seller of junk, he said, and his faithful wife would do her best to see him established once more in the business world. She kept her promise only too well—but that comes later!

At the same time Edelman told me how he had been driven from a town a little ways up-state by the persecutions of his fellow junkies; that it was hard to find a junk dealer who really knew his trade and was a gentleman in the bargain, although he, God helping him, always tried to do both. And he concluded with the modest wish that the junk dealers of our town would accord him the welcome he deserved.

I hoped so, too, and for a week or so after Edelman started out a-junking with the horse and wagon purchased from our charity committee's loan all went well. The sisterhood gave Mrs. Edelman great bundles of discarded clothes for her husband to sell, and Mrs. Marcus, whose husband owned the largest junk yard in town, packed the four Edelman youngsters into her machine, took them shopping and fitted them out for the winter. Then Edelman descended upon me

bowed down with gratitude and several dishes. His wife had sent me some gefillte fish and kuchen for Shabbas. It was only a trifle after I had done so much for them, and, waving aside my thanks, he deposited himself beside my table and began to talk business. God be thanked, he was doing well buying junk from the farmers very reasonable as they drove into town —he caught them as they drove past his house and his wife was always willing to act as scout—and selling it again to Marcus, a member of my congregation, who had treated him like a long-lost brother, even to giving him a scale for weighing junk which must have cost every cent of ten dollars when new. Then more intimate details about the profession, with an accurate description of every bargain he had made during the last three days—all this while I waited to attack my next week's sermon or open my morning mail.

After that Edelman called with painful regularity, sometimes with a flimsy excuse, sometimes on the pretext that he just wanted me to know how quickly he was getting on his feet. But now beneath his description of bargains which should have landed the trustful farmers in the poor-house—and Edelman in jail!—ran a current of criticism against those members of my congregation who happened to be junk dealers.

For the native junkies resented the newcomer and tried in all the gentle ways known to junk dealers the world over to compel him to leave the overcrowded field. According to Edelman they even offered fabulous prices for scrap iron and old shoes in order to outbid him with his clients. Then congregational telephoning and business correspondence had to wait until Edelman finished his lecture on the regular price

of such articles; and I didn't have the heart to tell him to hurry. "Doctor," he told me again and again with a quiver in his voice, "doctor, with every junky in town trying to cut me in the throat, I ain't got a friend but you and God." After that I just had to let my own affairs wait and listen to Edelman's tribulations.

Soon I began to hear the other side of the junk controversy. The small dealers never troubled me, but they complained to Marcus, who dropped in on a particularly busy Friday morning to explain that our town was already overcrowded with buyers and sellers of junk who resented the newcomer. Not that Marcus himself had anything to fear from poor Edelman; but his wife had numerous relatives who were junkies, and after the manner of our co-religionists, was determined to help them fight their battles.

"Rosie won't invite my cousin, Abe Kraus's wife, to her bridge parties," Marcus told me with a grin for the weakness of womankind in general and his wife in particular. "But it gets her sore, she says, after all the Yehudim here done for the Edelman's, to have Edelman doing so much better than Abe Kraus's Moses. Moses is a young fellow and he just started a store and it ain't right for a outsider like Edelman to do twicet the business just because he lives a little out of town and can get at them farmers first. And chutzpah! When I told Edelman we had too many junk dealers in town and he ought to get some place where it wasn't so crowded, he says he's satisfied here, but I can move if I want to. You've just got to speak to him, rabbi."

But before I could make peace between them, Edelman took affairs into his own grimy hands. Perhaps

I'd better tell you about it in Mrs. Edelman's own words. She told me all about it when I telephoned to their junk shop after reading in my morning paper that young Moses Kraus had been fined ten dollars and costs by our police judge for striking that lady and calling her unflattering names. Her story ran something like this:

"Honest, rabbi, it's a shame for the goyim, and me and my husband trying to earn an honest living and asking nothing of nobody. Just 'cause those Marcus's done a few little things for us, they think they own the earth; they tell us to get out but we won't. Then that Marcus, that roshe, rents a store right across from our place and puts his nephew there so he can stop the farmers before we get at 'em. And, rabbi, there's a gentleman named Mr. Durkin from a farm 'way out on the Turner road, and we do a regular business with him. And yesterday he comes in to town and that Moses gets him before I do and tries to buy junk off'n him. And I come up, rabbi, as polite as I can, and says how he's my customer; and Moses Kraus gets mad and calls me a name—I'd shame myself to tell you it, rabbi!—and hits me; and I give him just a little push—a very small push, rabbi, 'cause I ain't so strong as I was since I'm nursing the baby—and he falls over in the road on purpose; and while he dusts the dust off'n his pants, I buys Mr. Durkin's junk. And my Joe he sold it yesterday—not to that gonoph, Marcus, believe me—for a good profit. So Joe says I shouldn't try to have Moses arrested for insulting me and make rishus before the goyim.

"And then a policeman comes to get me and says Moses has me arrested for knocking him down. So

I tell the judge all about it, like I tell it to you, and the judge is a gentleman and fines Moses for fighting me.

"Yes, rabbi, we're all well, thanks God, and so soon I feel a little better—I've been sick in my nerves with all that trouble—I'll make you some more gefillte fish and sent it up with Joe."

But the pugnacious junk lady never kept her promise. The next week she packed up the four little Edelmans of assorted sizes and followed her husband to a town just across the state line where they intended to open a larger and a better junk shop. For Marcus had bought them out—at an enormous profit to Edelman.

"And what could I do?" he shrugged. "I couldn't have those junkies making rishus all the time and that Edelman got them all excited. And my Rosie wanted I should do something for Moses Kraus; so I had to pay the Edelmans to move away. It wasn't a healthy location for Moses, nebbich, with that Mrs. Edelman living right across the street!"

IV. The Night Watches

Someone asked my nephew, aged six, the other day what he planned to be when he was a man, and I smiled rather complacently, I'm afraid, when the youngster piped back: "I'm going to be a rabbi just like uncle." But my pride collapsed with a thud, when, on being questioned why he preferred my profession above all others, he answered that he wanted a job where he wouldn't have to work except on Saturdays. The admiring family group grinned over the ancient joke; I smiled, too, but somewhat grimly. For although the

previous day had been a Wednesday, I had been far from idle. There had been letters and telephone calls in the morning, a Sisterhood meeting to coax into shape in the afternoon, an informal talk at a business men's club dinner in the evening. Then, when I had finally donned bathrobe and slippers and was comfortably stretched out in the easy chair beside my study lamp, an uncut magazine in my hand, the telephone bell had jangled for the twentieth time that day, calling me from my rest with a summons that I could not ignore. A half hour later I stood wtih Adolph Frank at his mother's bedside. She had been ailing for some months; now her son had called me to sit beside her until she died.

There is nothing worth recording about Bella Frank's life. There are, God be thanked, a score of women like her in every community, simple, quiet souls who do the day's work smilingly, with a sort of divine patience, and, at the last, teach us their worth by leaving us helpless and bewildered at our loss. She was not a cultured woman as certain ambitious young ladies in my Monday afternoon study circle consider culture. She never crossed the threshold of a high school until her own children were old enough to acquire the higher education she herself had never tried to attain. Just a simple-hearted woman, loving her husband and children, serving them in the humble ways of her household, quick to respond to every call for charity, in short, the type we love to describe as "a mother in Israel." Every Friday night she lit her Sabbath candles, every Saturday morning she sat in the family pew, her children about her, until they left the home nest, one by one, the girls to go to homes of their

own in another state, the two older boys to follow their professions in a distant city. Only Adolph, "her baby," remained, a fine, lovable young fellow of twenty-five who turned a haggard face to me as I entered the death chamber.

"She wanted you," he told me briefly, and sank back in his seat beside the bed.

Suffering though she was, Bella Frank managed to flash one of her old welcoming smiles to me as I took her hand. She even tried to speak, but the effort was too great and she shook her head. The room was very still as the three of us silently waited for the end.

As morning broke she grew delirious; she imagined the absent children who had been hastily summoned had already returned and were bending over her pillow; she greeted them by tender baby pet-names she had used in their infancy; Adolph must have remembered them for he winced at the foolish endearments sounding so strangely in that place of death. She spoke of his dead father, too, whom he could scarcely recall, and old and departed friends whom neither of us had ever known. She smiled as she chatted and both of us rejoiced that she was to depart in peace.

But the respite from pain was all too short, and, as the gray dawn stole over the pillows, Adolph crept from the room unable to bear the sight of her sufferings. Dr. Crane, who had come to share our vigil, could do little; in the last extremity, the man of science was as helpless as I. In fact, it was to me that Adolph Frank turned for comfort when he was strong enough to join us again.

"Can't you do something for her?" he asked hoarsely, adding incoherently: "You're her friend; you can't

bear to let her go on like that! As long as she has to go, why must she suffer so first?"

I had no new answer for the boy; before the Great Mystery, I, too, was helpless and without understanding. "May God take her quickly," was all that I could tell him in his agony.

A strange look came into Adolph's face. "People always pray when they want anything very badly, don't they?" he asked, as simply as a child might have done. He fumbled for his chair beside the bed and hid his face in his hands. "God"—he sobbed—"God"—and could go no further.

The physician had stepped out into the hall and we were alone with the sufferer. I tried to place my hand upon Adolph's shoulder, but he pulled himself away and spoke harshly.

"I want to pray and I can't!" he said in a sort of strained wonder. "It's so long since I tried—when I was a kid and she made me say 'em every single night. And now when I want to ask for something—I can't."

I tried to comfort him but the words stuck in my throat. When a boy of fourteen he'd had prayers enough, both Hebrew and English, as part of his confirmation studies; but I did not need his frantic confession to know that he had long since buried them away with his Sabbath school notebooks and beribboned confirmation diploma. In a flash of sudden bitterness I felt how useless a thing the Judaism we teach our children has become unless we can help them to translate it into terms of daily life. Adolph had faithfully memorized certain passages from the Bible; he had learned the names of the kings of Israel; but

somehow I and his other teachers had not given him what a certain stout old Scotchman once called "a grip on God." In this first great crisis of his life, he groped in the dark without a staff to support him. All the religious teachings of his Sabbath school days, all of his mother's gentle piety, had not taught him how to pray.

I do not know how long we sat there in the strained silence, broken only by the brisk ticking of the little dresser clock, which sounded peculiarly heartless just then, and the tortured breathing from the woman on the heaped-up pillows. At last the first rays of the sun struggled to pass the carelessly adjusted curtains and Bella Frank spoke to us, painfully but distinctly, her hands groping for Adolph until she held him fast.

"Sonny," she told him, "I'm going. Tell the children I'm sorry I couldn't wait to see them." Her voice trailed off and her hands dropped back upon the coverlet.

The doctor bent over her and when he raised his head I read her sentence. "It is nearly over," he said.

I began to read the prayers for the dying; Adolph had long forgotten his meager Hebrew, but somehow the sonorous, rolling sentences seemed to bring him a little comfort. He knew, although he could find no words to plead for her, that his mother was dying as she had always hoped to die. Obeying a sudden impulse, I translated as I read; perhaps he might feel then that he was also praying.

"Praised be Thou, O God, Lord of mercy and forgiveness," ran the prayer. "Open to me the gates of righteousness; I will enter through them and praise the Lord!" And then the final confession of faith, which even Adolph was able to follow, the dying woman smil-

ing as his lips stumbled over the half-forgotten words, "Sh'ma Yisroel, Adonai Elohenu, Adonai Echod."

We said no more for a moment for her eyes closed gently and she smiled a tender, contented smile. "Go thy way, for the Lord hath called thee," I continued in my reading, "go thy way, and may the Lord be with thee!" But I was not thinking of the happy dead; in my heart of hearts I prayed that He might be with Adolph Frank also, lest the boy should feel entirely alone in his grief.

"EIGHT O'CLOCK SHARP!"

A Dramatic Skit in One Scene

CHARACTERS

MRS. KAHN, *chairlady of the occasion*
LEONARAH, *her daughter*
MR. KAHN, *her husband*
MRS. FREUND
MRS. APPLEBAUM
MRS. SUSSMAN
BIRDIE SUSSMAN, *her daughter*
RABBI SEEDER
MRS. SEEDER
MR. MASSELTOV, *the speaker of the evening*
GOLDIE LOBENSTERN, *society reporter*
TOM, *colored janitor of Temple, hired for the occasion*
EVIE, *his wife, busy in the cloak room*
Other Council Members, their husbands and guests.

TIME: About 8:30 on a warm spring evening.
PLACE: The Century Club.

(*Brace your nerves and enter with me into an overheated, overcrowded hall, made over for the occasion from ballroom into lecture hall. For the chairs, usually pushed against the wall for chaperoning dowagers, have been arranged in rows by the slow but dependable* TOM, *and, upon the platform near the piano, he has placed a small table on which stands*

a silver vase of red carnations, a pitcher of water and a glass. The flowers, lent by MRS. KAHN, *suggest a festal evening; the water, refreshment for a public speaker. I said, "Brace your nerves." Unless they thrive on excited shrieks, the sound of many voices trying to drown out others, the tinklings of the piano, very much out of tune,—but, says the house committee, as long as we rent out the hall and let everyone play on it, it's no use having it tuned, is there? So, if you enjoy excitement, you will stand quietly by and from the babel of sounds seek to piece enough dialogue to learn the reason for the fray. Which dialogue runs about as follows:)*

MRS. KAHN. My Leonarah isn't ready to start the program yet and I don't care if it is past time to begin. She's not in practice and if she wants to run over her piece a few times before she plays it for the audience, that's her privilege. And suppose the tickets did say, "eight o'clock sharp." Nobody ever believes what they read on tickets. (*Over her shoulder to* LEONARAH, *who is pounding the keys rather viciously.*) How is it going, dearie?

LEONARAH. I told you I couldn't do anything with this tin-pan, mamma. After I've been taking lessons all my life on a baby grand!

RABBI SEEDER (*coming up on the platform, plainly nervous, for he is a very punctual man*). Go right ahead and play, anyhow, Miss Leonarah. We're not any of us musical critics, you know.

MRS. KAHN (*plainly offended*). I tell you, Rabbi, my Leonarah is used to playing for music critics all her life; when she was in boarding school they always

had her play for company and the professor in music said she was his star pupil if she'd only practice a little. Only she ain't just herself tonight, 'cause she's been going out so much she hasn't had time to practice.

MR. KAHN (*who being related can sometimes be impolite*). For God's sake, Lenie, stop that pounding and make up your mind whether you're going to play or not. Here's Mr. Masseltov coming in the front door now. He was here at eight prompt and you weren't ready so he went out to reserve his berth for the ten o'clock train. (*To give added weight to his argument.*) We're paying his expenses and if he misses it we'll have to pay his room at the hotel extra; so we've got to get started right away and you're the one to begin. Hurry up, now, and mamma can call the meeting to order.

(*He has grown rather sharp in his excitement;* LEONARAH *gives him a look of mingled scorn and heartbreak before she buries her face in her handkerchief and retires into the cloak room; consternation as her sobs reach the audience, united with the consolations of the sympathetic* EVIE.)

EVIE (*a pretty yellow girl dressed in the cast-off finery of the ladies present, as she is exclusive and works only for Temple members*). Now, honey, don't go crying and making your pretty eyes red. You is too pretty in that there new dress to take on so. (*Sobs from the insulted pianist.*) I reckon you is just feeling trifling this even', ain't you? And your pa done scolded you before everybody. And you trying to do your best. (*Sobs.*) Ain't that the God's truth?

Yes'm, here's your cloak, Miss Lennee, and your scarf. I don't blame you one bit; I wouldn't play neither if they all went on and insulted me.

MRS. KAHN (*to her husband in the tone she usually reserves for their own home*). Now you've done it! (*To the others who cluster sympathetically around her.*) No, it's no use trying to calm her down; she's always been so high-spirited and sensitive—just like me. Now who'll we have to open the program? We can't begin without music.

CHORUS. Of course, we can't. Who'll play then? Mr. Kahn's talking to Mr. Masseltov at the door now and he looks awfully mad. Can't you play something —oh, just anything—can't you?

MRS. KAHN. Maybe you can play us just a little piece, Birdie.

BIRDIE (*sullenly*). I'm all out of practice since I got engaged.

MRS. APPELBAUM. Why, Birdie, wasn't you playing that piece about bananas and all the latest songs the night we come over to see your mamma?

BIRDIE. Well, I'm not enough in practice to play at a moment's notice. I'm not going to play second fiddle to anybody.

(*She strolls haughtily off to take her place in the slowly gathering audience.*)

MRS. KAHN. Then we'll just have to begin with the second number. Your niece is here, isn't she, Mrs. Freund?

(MRS. FREUND *nods and the program begins just an hour late. The first number is* MRS. FREUND'S *niece,* MAXINE, *up from Chicago for a visit. She is well known in Jewish club cir-*

cles in her native city for her whistling specialties and is always willing to oblige on any and all occasions. Now she holds the program up a precious ten minutes or more to do her stunt which includes imitations of birds, native and foreign, ending with her own original imitation of Ina Claire imitating Frances Starr.)

MRS. APPELBAUM (*fervently to* MRS. FREUND). It's a shame, Mrs. Freund, not to let a girl like that go on the stage.

MRS. FREUND. That's what I tell her; but she's going with a nice young man now; he hasn't anything yet, but his father—so——

(*And a shrug concludes that romance.*)

MR. MASSELTOV (*raging behind the scenes*). Am I next, Mr. Kahn?

MRS. KAHN. Our next number on the program will be a few little selections by Baby Schwartz.

MR. MASSELTOV (*desperate*). Have them cut her out. I've got a thirty-minute speech prepared and——

MR. KAHN. Then cut down your speech. That Schwartz kid is my wife's cousin's child and a regiment couldn't hold her off the platform.

(*The next number proves to be the inevitable "child marvel," in this case, "Baby Schwartz," who at fourteen still boasts the title under which she made her début in Sabbath school programs at the age of five. She is an undersized little girl with very thin legs, who first presents her own version of the "Spring Song" done in pink crêpe and talcum powder, her sailor's hornpipe which makes the ex-service men in the audience more grateful than ever that they didn't join*

the navy, and her cute little impersonsations of Mary Pickford and Theda Bara. She bows herself off at last, bare legs, ruffles, baby stare and all, and KAHN, *egged on by the now raving orator, begs his wife to speed up the program a little. But she is too busy to listen, being deep in consultation with* MRS. SUSSMAN, *chairlady of the refreshment committee.* MRS. SUSSMAN *is a regal creature in black net and diamonds and wears a large white bib apron as the badge of her authority, although she always manages to be otherwise occupied while the others prepare lunch.*)

MRS. SUSSMAN (*in a very audible whisper*). Tom wants to know if he should start serving the ice cream?

MRS. KAHN (*just as audibly*). Heavens, no! We're only half through. And God knows how long he's going to speak when he once gets started.

(*The speaker of the evening sinks back in his chair, speechless with conflicting emotions. The next number comes up and sings a solo about hunting for love and finding it not and stumbling on forever in the darkness. She is a sweet girl and has a really charming voice; even the speaker of the evening has to admit it, and he would write himself among her heartiest admirers if she didn't spoil it all by accepting an encore or two. By the time she has bowed herself off to really enthusiastic applause* MR. MASSELTOV *is too peeved to listen to* MOE RASHINSKY'S *very popular dialect stories. Instead he slouches in his seat, muttering under his breath —but, then, he may be only rehearsing his*

speech. Then at last MRS. KAHN *comes to the front of the platform and all know by her too gracious smile that she is going to introduce the distinguished guest of the evening.*)

MRS. KAHN. Ladies and gentlemen: It gives me the greatest pleasure to announce what you already know—that tonight we have with us Professor Masseltov, one of the first, if not the very first, of living Jewish orators. He comes to us with a message which we will do well to lay to our hearts. (*There is a stir in the back of the hall; but* MRS. KAHN, *who gets rattled when speaking if she looks at her audience, continues to fix her gaze upon the bunch of red carnations and does not seem to notice it.*) A message which we will do well to lay to our hearts. He will speak on Ethics in the Talmud, and I know we will learn a great deal from his message. Ladies and gentlemen, I take great pleasure in bringing before you our most distinguished guest, Professor Morton Masseltov.

GOLDIE (*from her place in the front row*). How does he spell it—two s's?

(*Opens her notebook with an important air.*)

MRS. SEEDER. Spell it any way you want to. The newspaper will get it wrong anyhow. I know they always try to spoil my husband's sermons when they print them.

(*A long silence. No speaker, distinguished or otherwise, appears.* MRS. KAHN *looks plainly annoyed.*)

MRS. KAHN. Will the professor please come forward? We are so anxious to hear him.

TOM (*appearing in the rear entrance, a kitchen apron about his ample waist*). Are you all waiting

for that stranger gentleman with the long beard? He come in here a minute ago for a sandwich.

MRS. KAHN. Well, where is he?

TOM. Oh, he's done gone. He told me he had to catch a train.

MRS. SUSSMAN (*bustling forth*). Anyhow, we ain't come for nothing. 'Cause we've got perfectly grand refreshments.

MRS. KAHN (*a little later, to a sympathetic group gathered about her table*). Such chutzpah! And we paid all his expenses!

SLOW CURTAIN

UNHALLOWED CANDLES

The Story of a Modern Sabbath

EVERYTHING in the little apartment looked very new and bridey, to use that unliterary but most expressive word . . . walls and woodwork shining, furniture just as highly polished as when it had stood in the showrooms; this Greuze head in its dainty frame plainly a wedding present, the book ends on the davenport table likewise. While on the gateleg table, a gift from Aunt Frieda, stood a beaten brass bowl of crimson roses. Myer had sent them up that morning—"for our wedding anniversary" ran the card that still rest upon them.

It wasn't exactly a wedding anniversary, for the young people hadn't been married for more than eight months. But Myer was an attentive husband, and, knowing that his wife, like most women, wanted him to be sentimental as long after the wedding day as possible, humored her in her whim to hold the twentieth of every month sacred; they had been married on the twentieth of June, and here it was bleak and windy March and he still sent her roses. No wonder Celia considered herself a lucky young woman as she put the finishing touches to the dining-room table, humming as she worked.

It was to be the first "anniversary" in their new home. There had been a long wedding trip, then a visit to Celia's relatives, then a few weeks in a hotel while

furnishing the apartment. Celia was glad that she had decided it would be absurd to have a maid to help her keep the three pretty rooms in order; she realized that tonight it would be embarrassing to have a stranger witness the little ceremony she felt she would perform self-consciously, since it was so new to her. But she knew she would not feel self-conscious before her husband.

Myer was an orphan, not especially attached to the uncle and aunt who had educated him since his early boyhood. Celia was rather glad that he did not expect her to be especially nice to his relatives; they had welcomed her into the family graciously enough, given several elaborate affairs in her honor, and sent a most adequate check for a wedding present, but the girl realized that they could never be her people. They had come to America too late to lose their foreign stiffness, their self-consciousness before the native born; she felt that they secretly criticized her to Myer for her bobbed hair, the knickers she wore for golfing; above all, for not being more "Jewish."

For Celia frankly belonged to that ever-growing group known as "Kaddish Jews." She usually attended Temple with her mother on the fall holy days; she never neglected to say Kaddish for her father; she even belonged to the Junior Council, since they gave lovely dances, and Celia was too proud a little body to try to attend certain Junior League parties where Jews were not exactly welcome; and she had once knitted two sweaters and embroidered six handkerchiefs for the bazaar for Jewish war sufferers, which totals the extent of Celia's Jewishness.

Little by little she learned from Myer that he had

come from what he called "a regular Jewish home." Until the demands of haughty maids forced his aunt to compromise or do her own work, that lady had always kept a kosher house; even now certain forbidden delicacies never appeared on her table; aunt and uncle always attended services and served on various boards; they always had a family Seder, and aunt had always insisted upon Myer being at home whenever possible on Friday night for the family meal. Myer was not especially enthusiastic as he told Celia how uncle said Kiddush and aunt blessed her candles; but, then, Myer was not enthusiastic about anything except baseball and pinochle and the Republican party—just before election day. He was just an everyday American, not given to sentiment or overenthusiasms of any sort.

But with Celia it was different. A bit she had seen in the movies, a chapter from one of Zangwill's novels —this she suspected was real Jewish life. She who had never seen her mother or any other woman light the Sabbath candles felt oddly cheated; her romantic soul grieved that she as a child had never hunted for the Afikomon, or opened the door for Elijah to enter and bless the Passover feast. Her eyes softened as she told herself that her own children would never be cheated of their Jewish birthright.

She did not tell any of these musings to Myer, for she feared he would laugh. He had a way of laughing at many of her fancies, but she did not feel hurt; for she staunchly believed that he was too fine and sensitive to show his real feelings even to her; that his teasing laughter covered the deepest emotions. It is a mistake many a young wife makes about her husband

and loves to cherish even after she learns that she has been mistaken. For women love to pet and cuddle their worn-out illusions as little girls still nurse their old favorites even after being chided that they are too old to play with dolls any more!

But Celia had been married only eight months and her illusions were still rosy and healthy. This was the first Friday evening in their very new home and she felt the wedding anniversary date lent it an added consecration. During the entire afternoon she had vibrated between stove and cook book, between kitchen table and telephone, calling up her amused mother for just another bit of advice. For Celia, although anything but an experienced cook, had resolved that not a bit of bakery goods would pollute her first Sabbath table; she knew, without Myer's boasting of his aunt's cooking, that the worthy lady had always done her own Shabbas baking.

The table was set at last, the lights turned low on the gas stove; Celia picked out the only dress Myer had thought to admire from her trousseau, a soft brown affair with bands of daring Russian embroidery; she did extra things to her hair which he preferred to see under a net; she clasped on the necklace her husband's aunt and uncle had given her for an engagement present, a piece of jewelry which had always meant a good deal to Myer after seeing the receipted bill of a very exclusive jeweler. Then out to the dining-room to add the last touches to the festal board—the brass bowl of crimson roses and the two tall candlesticks from the bookcase.

"It's lucky I got them instead of another pair of book ends," considered the bride, as she fitted her first

Shabbas candles into the sockets. From the top drawer of the buffet she drew out the prayer book she had borrowed from one of her Junior Council friends. Yes, there were prayers for the home. Friday night prayers among the rest. She wasn't so sure of the Hebrew, even with the book before her, after her friend's lessons; well, she'd do her best and Myer wouldn't mind even if she had to stumble now and then. He'd love her just as much, since she was doing her best to give him a Shabbas such as he had always known before his marriage.

At the sound of his key in the door she ran to meet him. A kiss—"the roses were lovely, dear!" and they were in the dining room. She would not give him time to take off his overcoat, she was so childishly eager to see him take in his surprise.

Myer stood before the prettily decked table, his eyes taking in the best embroidered linen, the most festal silver, including a silver cup at his place that he had never seen before, the flowers, the tall candles. His brows puckered with bewilderment.

"You didn't tell me we were going to have company. And you didn't set for any extra. Who's coming?"

"Nobody. I want to have our first Shabbas just for us—the first Shabbas in our new home."

"Shabbas! What put that into your head?"

"I thought at your aunt's home—she surely kept Shabbas for you and you loved it," she faltered.

"Sure, she had Shabbas and the rest of the old dope," he agreed dryly. "And uncle was always yelling at me for trying to sneak away early to go to a picture show with the bunch. Or he'd be sore that I was trying to get out of going to Cheder every day, or aunt was

giving me fits for mixing her meat and milk dishes. Thank God, you weren't brought up in that kind of Judaism. I guess I liked you from the start for being so American and different from my folks."

She struggled to keep back the disappointed tears which filled her eyes. "But—Shabbas! I thought we could celebrate it every week, the way they do in Jewish books, lighting candles and you making a blessing, and everything."

He laughed, and this time she knew that his laughter was not the cover for tender and yearning thoughts.

"Good night! I don't want any of that junk around my home. It's all right to belong to a Temple, maybe, but I believe we Jews ought to be like everybody else, and that if we mind our own business and are straight with everybody that's all we need. That's my religion, anyhow. Now, come on and bring on your supper. It's a sort of anniversary tonight, like you reminded me yesterday morning, so I got two seats for the 'Follies' and if we don't hurry we'll miss the first number."

Something in her step, no longer tripping and young, as she came from the kitchen bearing the soup stirred vague compunctions within him.

"Say, it's all the same to me if you light those candles and make a fuss," he said good-naturedly.

Celia shook her head. "I don't want to now," was all she answered.

. . . The candlesticks, a most appropriate wedding gift to a Jewish bride, still stand upon the bookcase. But since that night Celia has never wanted to light them again.

STAIRS

The Tragedy of an Immigrant

HE worked in a hospital down on the lower East Side, doing the most menial work in such an absent-minded way, that it is not likely either his pride or his soft white hands suffered overmuch. But when he cleaned the dingy reception room or scrubbed the long flight of white stairs, he could not forget that he dwelt in a House of Pain; keenly sensitive by nature, now morbidly sympathetic because of his own sufferings, he suffered a daily crucifixion with those who sat, wan-faced and hopeless, waiting to see their sick or learn the verdict from physician or nurse. And the hundreds of feet forever tramping up and down his white stairs left them disgustingly dirty, sometimes in less than an hour after a scrubbing. . . . Somehow that hurt him the most.

Those who came up and down the stairs never noticed the thin, silent man, his tragic eyes glowing in his white face. Doctors, always in a hurry, spick and span nurses, women with shawls and bearded men, they all passed him by, knowing nothing of his story, never dreaming why he looked after them with a fanatical hate gleaming in his eyes if their shoes left a single stain upon his freshly scrubbed stairs. Even if they had, they who knew the East Side would merely have shaken their heads in understanding pity and passed on. For Hyman's was an old story with them . . . as old as Israel.

Hyman Rubinowitz had thought himself fortunate during those now almost legendary days before the war that his lame and twisted foot had exempted him from military service. He had heard too many tales of the horrors the Czar's army held for the Jew not to rejoice that in the sudden madness that shook the world he was allowed to remain at home with his young wife and three little children. Life went on very placidly for a little space. Hyman, the poverty-stricken Yeshibah student, rich only in learning, had wedded the daughter of the wealthiest Jewish merchant in the place; now he still spent long hours over his precious books while his energetic young wife carried on her father's trade. Enjoying a comfortable home, free from all cares, rejoicing in his family, Hyman smiled contentedly in his Gan Eden and declared that God was good.

It is too long a story—and far too commonplace!—to follow the steps which led Hyman from the quiet corner of the Beth Hamidrash to the misery-sodden hospital of the East Side of New York. One misfortune followed another, the first "hard times," the falling away of customers, the reluctant spending of the savings which had seemed so stout a security against accident and want. Hunger came—for now money could not buy food—and pestilence, since the physicians were far away healing wounded men that they might rise from their beds and wound and slay their enemies. And when at last a war-weary world went mad in its frantic joy and shouted "Peace!" even then Israel knew no peace, for a more dreadful war began against the Jew.

Night after night Hyman would wake in his bed and live over the horror of the pogrom that had robbed

him of his wife and children. He could remember a great deal of it, fragments here and there, like jagged bits of a child's puzzle, which when placed together present a perfect picture. There were mad cries—frantic searching for a hiding place—a bolted door—which crashed in—devils maddened with their lust to slay—then a blackness that blotted out the agony for a while. There was a long gap after he regained his consciousness in which he must have raved like a torn animal over what he found on the floor beside him, the dreadful things he tried to recognize for his wife and children. But months after in America he remembering doing one mad, futile thing: he had staggered to a pail of water in the corner; but instead of wiping his own wounded forehead he had started to scour the red-stained floor. When neighbors who had escaped the mob found him they could scarcely persuade him to come away with them. He knew that his wife had always kept her floor spotless, he said, but now he could not get it clean.

Followed the long agony of waiting in a distant port, which he reached after terrible hardships, until his passport could be viséd. At first he had protested that he wished to remain with his dead; but he was still young, less than thirty, and life was still strong in his heart. In America, he dreamed, he might forget the red horror he could not wash from the floor; in America there was safety for the Jew and peace. And he did not ask for much—only a quiet corner in some Beth Hamidrash where he might sit and study—and forget.

In New York he found there were too many like him, too many unfitted for active life in a very active

world. And in America, he soon learned, there is little of the tradition that the Jew who gives his life to the Torah also serves and need not toil for his bread. Not very tactfully—for how can an overburdened charity worker be tactful in these busy days?—he was told that an able-bodied man must earn his own living in America. His older brother, a presser with whom he made his home, repeated the fact with added emphasis. If Hyman wouldn't work, he said, he'd have to go elsewhere to live. And this Hyman feared to do. The last year had left him very bruised and timid; more like a sick child that fears the dark than a normal man, he longed to be with his own kin. And he had grown strangely attached to his brother's youngest child, Fannie, a tot of four, who made sunshine in the dark tenement, and reminded him of his own little Rosie, who had laughed and played until the dark days of hunger and want had changed her into a listless shadow.

There is little to do for an untrained worker, especially a lame foreigner who knows no English. In the days when Hyman went wearily from place to place in search of work, native-born Americans, many of them men of education, not a few ex-service men, also followed the same weary quest. It was only through the kind offices of the same hurried charity official who had first ordered Hyman to look out for himself that he was able to find employment. The work was in a hospital, the worst possible place for a man with torn and quivering nerves; but poverty must not be squeamish and Hyman felt himself a beggar. Besides, the hospital was near enough to his brother's home to allow him to have his lunch there every day. This meant he could spend a little more time with Fannie,

hold her on his lap, tell her the old Jewish fairy tales which had delighted his own children in those golden, dreamlike days.

Then, a little before one, back to the hospital and the job he hated worst of all, cleaning the long flight of white stairs that led into the reception room. It hurt his back, for he was anything but strong; and he soon learned to be afraid of the task since it stirred the memories that so often woke him, shivering and sweating with terror in the dead of night. Then he would steal to the cot where little Fannie slept with her older brother, carry the child back to bed with him and finally quiet himself by listening to her peaceful breathing. But he could not have little Fannie at the hospital with him, and he was always frightened while scrubbing the stairs. Then he would remember another floor at which he had worked frantically until his neighbors dragged him away.

Once when he was feeling particularly tired and his head hurt him more than usual, he spoke to his brother about finding him another job. "I know a little English now," he boasted. "I am not so green."

"You don't know enough to hurt you," was the ungracious answer. "You stay where you are. The pay ain't bad for a greener and nowadays you're lucky to get any work."

"But the stairs," stammered Hyman, wishing he might unburden his heart, but too afraid of his brother's usual reaction to speak frankly, "the stairs are always dirty and they expect me to keep them clean. I clean them every afternoon on my hands and knees and as soon as I get them white the people come in with dirty shoes."

His brother shrugged hopelessly. "You must be crazy," he commented cheerfully. "You do your work what you're paid for and you should worry how long it lasts. When I press a pair pants, do you think I lose sleep worrying how they'll fit? You'll get over that if you're long in America."

"If I didn't have to work by a hospital," Hyman was growing more and more apologetic. "I see such things! Last week a boy come in with his face—" he shuddered. "It makes me sick."

"You keep your mind on your work and don't look at the patients all the time," advised his brother, turning to his Yiddish paper with an air of boredom. "I don't like my boss neither, but jobs ain't never perfect."

"If I didn't have to keep the stairs clean!" Hyman mumbled, then smiled as little Fannie pushed a stump of a pencil into his hand. Until her bedtime he kept her laughing and crowing over the grotesque figures he drew upon her slate.

He was scrubbing the hospital stairs the next afternoon when his sister-in-law stumbled through the swinging doors, a familiar little figure in her arms. He turned and stared at her with eyes growing blank with horror; slowly his brain filmed the picture that so often tortured his sleepless nights.

"My Fannie," shrieked the mother. "She cut her hand—terrible—see. She's dying. Get me a doctor —quick!"

Love, stronger than all his horror, made Hyman reach for the wounded, reddening hand. Suddenly he dropped it with the cry of a torn animal and flung himself upon his knees beside the pail of soapy water. Wringing out his rag mechanically, he began to scrub

the stairs which would never look white to him again.

"They got Fannie, too—the killers got my Fannie, too!" he repeated again and again in a low, dreadful monotone. "I can't wash the blood off—it's too red."

. . . . "Sure, the kid's all right," said the brisk young woman at the desk that evening as the night clerk questioned her concerning the afternoon's excitement. "Fooling with the butcher knife when her mother wasn't on the job, but Dr. Isaacson fixed it up in a minute with sticking plaster. But her uncle's gone sure. I thought they'd never get him out of here. He was just bound to keep on scrubbing the front stairs." She jammed on her hat, took out her vanity bag and powdered her nose. "Have to hurry—a date at the movie," she said, as she fastened her near-mink choker.

"I always thought he was nuts," commented the night clerk. "With those crazy eyes and everything. Why don't they keep them kind on the other side where they belong?"

A DAY IN SHUSHAN

Telling of the Aftermath of Queen Esther's Heroism

QUEEN ESTHER stood at the window of her apartments and her fair face was as pale as the pearls that lay about her throat and wreathed her shining, dark hair. Her eyes were black with horror and her hands clenched and unclenched themselves in her great agony: yet because of her the Jews had triumphed over their enemy. . . .

She had always been a timid, gentle girl, the orphan cousin of Mordecai, destined one day to wear the crown of Persia's vast empire. Those who spoke of her in awed whispers after the king had chosen her for his bride often recalled her many acts of kindness when she had dwelt among them; this one told of finding her weeping one morning in her garden over a tiny bird that had fallen from its nest and that now lay cold and stark in her hand; another had seen her binding the torn foot of a wretched cur, which tormenting boys had driven whining to her side; and Miriam, the old herb-seller in the corner of the market place, never wearied of the story of the girl Hadassah (as she was called among her own people) and the blind beggar.

"Once he stumbled in the roadside before Mordecai's house," said Miriam, "and would have fallen had she not caught him and raised him to his feet. And she bade him rest upon the doorstep and gave him bread to eat and wine to drink. It was just before the Sab-

bath and she had no time to go to the wine merchant before the sunset and the time for the evening meal was nigh. And when Mordecai rebuked her, ha, ha," and the ancient wife's laugh rose high and trembling, "she looked at him with those big violet eyes of hers, and said: 'But, cousin, is it not better to feed the hungry than to keep the Sabbath?' Mordecai repeated her words to my husband that evening in the synagogue —just a child but even then like a queen in her kindliness and pity."

And it was to this Esther, this tender woman soul so filled with love and pity for the helpless and the weak, that Mordecai told the tale of their people's peril.

"Think not that you shall escape," Mordecai warned the pale queen. "For when it is known that you are my cousin, you, too, will feel the hatred of Haman. You are a Jewess and when the day Haman has set for our death dawns, the soldiers of Haman will drag you forth even from this safe spot." And his eyes looked scornfully about the rich hall with its draperies of purple and its couches of ivory and gold. "You shall not escape even in the king's house," he told her and turned to depart.

But Esther clung to him weeping. "I have concealed my birth and my people only because it is your will," she said. "If evil come to the Jews I will not be silent. For how can I live if my people perish!" But for all her brave words she trembled as she spoke, for she had always been a timid girl and her royal state had brought her little courage. "Yet how dare I face the king and his certain wrath if I come to him unsummoned? I do not want to die!"

A look of scorn flashed over Mordecai's quiet face.

"Yet you will not risk your life to save others who are marked for the slaughter?" In sudden anger he seized her arm and dragged her toward the casement. "Look in the street beyond the strong gates of your palace," he commanded harshly. "See those old men and helpless women and little children—all doomed to die on the day Haman has marked for our slaughter. They stand no little distance away, but you have keen eyes and may recognize some of them—unless your glory has blinded you and you no longer know the faces of your old friends and neighbors."

Then Esther recognized many of her old friends and neighbors as they stood without the gates, waiting and praying that Mordecai should bring them good tidings from the queen.

"There is old Miriam, the market-woman," she faltered. "I remember how she used to bake me cakes and give me flowers from her garden when my dear mother died. And there is Rachel, the tanner's wife, with her baby in her arms. And poor old Seth—can that little fellow beside him be his grandson?" Mordecai nodded. "He was but a little baby when I left your house. The soldiers of Haman must not shed this innocent blood," she cried fiercely, and drew herself up to her slender height as though herself defying the assassins of her people.

"A soldier's sword is without pity," Mordecai told her quietly. "Unless you go before the king and win his word that our people shall not perish, the streets of Shushan will run with innocent blood. And that blood will be upon your head because you did not risk your own life that many might live through your courage."

Esther's eyes were wide with horror as though they already beheld the massacre which was to turn the Jews' quarter into a reeking shambles. "I cannot let them die," she murmured. "I cannot let them die."

"Once," Mordecai reminded her, "once I found you weeping over a wounded dove. Once, although you were a little maid, you defied some rough boys who sought to stone a whining dog. Has your heart grown so hard beneath your royal robes that it no longer beats in sympathy for the wounded and persecuted?"

Esther turned to him and the look of high courage in her eyes shone through her tears. "I have not grown less tender because the king has chosen me above all women," she answered. "Although a queen I am still the girl you knew." Her bosom rose and fell quickly beneath the gold embroidered tissues of her tunic. "I will face the king lest these feeble ones perish. And if he will not hear my prayer and will not grant our people the mercy of life, it is well that he should hand me over to the executioner. Better that I should sleep the sleep of death, rather than lie sleepless upon my couch night after night with the sound of their crying in my ears. Yea, I will go before the king and if I perish, I perish."

Then Mordecai kissed her and blessed her, and he wept also, for she was like his own child and very dear to him. And at her command he called together every Jewish soul in all Shushan and bade them put on sackcloth and ashes and fast and pray, that God should soften the heart of the king when Esther stood before him. And Esther and her maidens also fasted and prayed until the hour drew near when she laid aside her robes of mourning and bade them deck her that

she might shine like a star in all her beauty as she stood before the king.

The scrolls that learned scribes wrote in those days tell us how the king listened to Esther's petition. They tell us that when her courage failed her as she bowed before the throne, she did not speak of the matter that lay upon her, but begged the king to come to a banquet she had prepared for him. And here she denounced Haman to the king, her husband, and declared that if Haman gave the Jews over to death, she would also die, since she was also of the house of Israel. All this do the scrolls tell, but on one thing they are silent. For no one knew how Esther wept after her triumph except Dinah, her favorite handmaid, who tended her in her chamber after the other maidens had left her upon her couch.

Esther, even more beautiful in her royal robes of blue and purple than on the day when Ahasuerus had chosen her above the fairest women of his vast empire, had stood before the king at her banquet, beseeching him to turn Haman's hate aside and avert the shedding of innocent blood. Ahasuerus, swayed by her beauty and her tears, had denounced Haman and sent him forth to die the death he had planned for the Jew Mordecai. And Mordecai was appointed prime minister in his place. With the king's own ring upon his finger Mordecai had left the royal presence and had gone forth to strike terror into the hearts of those who had planned to torture and slay and pillage the Jews of Shushan.

And yet Esther, tossing upon her couch of gold and ivory, could not sleep. She had saved her people; she had raised her cousin to a place of power; above all,

the king she had always feared had proved himself to be a loving and a gentle husband. Yet she wept and Dinah, the little handmaid, could not comfort her.

"I grieve for Haman," Esther told her at last. "I know my cousin Mordecai would chide me for my tears, for he was a wicked man and deserved his death. But he was not wholly evil; at the banquet he spoke to me of his two youngest sons and boasted of their beauty and their skill in archery. I must weep when I think of his wife and his sons who lament his death, for he was not wicked to them."

"But, lady," said the little handmaid, "did you not hear that Haman's sons all died with him upon the gallows he had erected for Mordecai?"

Esther's heart sickened at the news, but she lived in a cruel age and she realized that no Jew should mourn that the root and branch of such a hated house should be forever destroyed. "And it is better," she said, "that Haman and his house should die for his sins, if his blood save the lives of our innocent people."

"Not only Haman paid the penalty," answered the little handmaiden, and her voice rang with pride, "not only Haman and his cursed sons suffered for seeking to bring us low. Look into the streets, lady, and see how our people, strengthened by the might of Mordecai, are slaying and pillaging their enemies—behold how the Jews slaughter the Persians!"

Then Esther left her couch and looked from the window out across the moonlight to the street beyond the palace gates. And she covered her face with her hands at what she saw, for she was a gentle creature, and the thought of blood and suffering troubled her soul and wrenched her heart.

"I risked my very life to go before the king that the innocent of my people might be spared," she cried, "and now the Jews in their turn shed innocent blood and take revenge upon their enemies." . . . In the hour of her triumph, Esther, the great queen, hid her face and wept like a little child.

"A STAR—FOR A NIGHT"

A Purim Reminiscence

THE rabbi's wife, dusting out the bookcases last spring, found a small pile of yellowing newspaper clippings, the top one bearing the picture of a girl with laughing eyes and tragic mouth. She laid them upon her husband's desk, wondering a little.

"Who is she?" asked the rabbi's wife.

The rabbi frowned a little. "Oh, a girl who acted 'Esther' in a crazy Purim play I gave my first year in the rabbinate," he answered shortly. He dropped the dusty papers into his scrap basket and opened a book, but he did not read another word all afternoon.

. . . . .

Rabbi Thieler was very young and very ambitious; perhaps that is why he still believed in Purim programs: good old-fashioned Purim plays and festive songs and dances, not a moving picture for the Sabbath School, as the fashion goes nowadays, or a hodge-podge of æsthetic poses and miscellaneous recitations from the different classes. And because this was his first year in Mortonville he swore to himself that he would give them a Purim program that would make them sit up and take notice, incidentally earning enough money to furnish the Sabbath school library, to say nothing of undying fame for himself as author and producer of his Purim masterpiece.

Followed the usual horror of working up a Purim

play, when all the criticism and nearly all the work falls upon the shoulders of the devoted fool who has vowed to see it through or perish in the attempt: bullying an incompetent cast into attending rehearsals, smoothing the feelings of irate mothers whose children either were slighted by too insignificant parts or overburdened with too many lines to learn; costumes to make; properties to beg, borrow or steal; tickets to sell. Yes, tickets! For the affair was to be given in the town Opera House, with a real curtain, a real orchestra and everything.

No, not everything! Always in stories, and sometimes in real life, one of the leading characters in an amateur performance falls ill exactly two days before the performance. Only in the case of poor young Rabbi Thieler's first play it was at the dress rehearsal that Minnie Stein arrived with the devastating news that her cousin Sylvia, who was to play Queen Esther, had developed diphtheria. Her throat had been hurting for several days and there had been talk of an understudy; but Sylvia had insisted until the last that she would feel all right by the day of the play, and, as Sylvia was the daughter of the president of the congregation, she had had her way as usual. And here it was almost Erev Purim, four o'oclock on Wednesday afternoon, to be accurate, and the beautiful programs, damp from the printers, announced the play "at eight o'clock sharp" Thursday evening!

Rabbi Thieler, who was on the stage directing the dress rehearsal—he knew little about directing a play, but couldn't find anybody in town to do it for him—sat down weakly on the pulpit chair, borrowed from the Temple to serve as a throne, and looked helplessly

at his disappointed cast. It was a lovely company of amateurs, too, from the kindergarten tots who had expected to act as pages to several of the young lady volunteer teachers who had finally been persuaded to appear as Queen Sylvia's ladies in waiting. And now Sylvia couldn't be Queen Esther and the play was ruined.

"Can't one of you girls take her place?" cried the harassed rabbi. "You've been at the rehearsals and you know the lines almost as well as Miss Sylvia did. One of you must help me out. We've got to give the play after all the trouble and expense we've put into it."

Minnie Stein gave a little cluck of horror. "Oh, doctor," she gushed, "none of us girls would have the nerve to take an important part like that, even if we knew it. It was different with poor Sylvia—she's taken elocution lessons ever since she could walk almost and she's a regular actress. But none of us have the sense to do it like she could."

The rabbi agreed, but was too polite to say so aloud. He looked over the Sabbath school children huddled in disappointed little groups, their faces sad above their cheesecloth finery and glass beads, and for a moment he forgot how much the play was to have meant to him. He had wanted to test himself out—to show that he could put over an entertainment that would be the talk of Mortonville generations still unborn—and he had failed. Worst of all, these youngsters who had looked forward so eagerly to their first great play had been disappointed also. He rose and spoke to them a trifle shakily.

"Well, boys and girls, as long as our Queen Esther

isn't here, I'm afraid we have to take off our costumes and go home."

"But Queen Esther is here," thrilled a voice from the darkened theater. There was a rustle of skirts—women wore real petticoats with real flounces in those days!—the click of little heels on the wooden stairs leading up to the stage, and Madeline stood before them. She smiled her grateful, half-timid little smile, as they stared at her and waited for the rabbi to speak.

"And who are you?" he demanded.

"Queen Esther," she mocked him. Then, suddenly sober, "I've been staying in town with friends a few days—I'm—ah—interested in plays—so when I heard you were rehearsing I thought it would be all right for me to drop in and look on. Then when I heard about your difficulties, I wondered whether I couldn't help out a little. I'm not afraid to act, the way these young ladies seem to be; I used to be in plays at school a good deal."

Rabbi Thieler continued to stare at her. Where had he seen those laughing eyes, that tragic mouth—some picture or other—but where? Or had he grown so tired and excited that his fancy was playing tricks upon him?

"It's a long part; do you think you could learn it all by tomorrow night?" he stammered.

Again the impish laughter in her eyes. "I think I can. Once I learned a very long part overnight—back at school. But if you don't think I can do it," she half turned to go.

Rabbi Thieler caught her sleeve of flowered silk (women wore real sleeves in those days!) "Please help us," he begged. "Here's my copy of the play—

I hope you can make out my writing" (few typewriters in those far-off barbarous times!), "and if you'll only read through your lines now that the children can rehearse——"

She read her lines and the rehearsal seemed to pass on fairy wings. The older girls stopped giggling to listen to the stranger's musical voice, to watch her gracious gestures. The children were spellbound and the overworked rabbi was too delighted with his new heroine to nag them into their usual nervousness and self-consciousness. Once it occurred to him that it was an act of Providence that this lovely creature should act in his play instead of Sylvia, with all her affected mannerisms and high-pitched voice. But he immediately rebuked himself for the thought: it was almost as wicked as wishing poor Sylvia to contract diphtheria for his sake. (Before we leave her forever, let us assure our anxious readers that Sylvia didn't die, as the heroine of the good old-fashioned romances always did as soon as a rival appeared upon the scene. When we last saw her she was the fat, happy mother of five children, and told us how her Sadie was always getting leading parts in their plays at college.)

Of course, Rabbi Thieler had to have an evening rehearsal with Madeline. He felt a little awkward about calling on her at her friends' house, as he wasn't exactly intimate with her hosts, Mr. and Mrs. Forman. The Formans never denied that they were Jews; in fact, Max Forman (who couldn't have denied his ancestry even if he had wanted to) gave very liberally to the Temple and attended service every Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur, unless he happened to be away at the Springs for his rheumatism which gen-

erally got worse around that time; but the Formans associated almost entirely with non-Jews, those of the town's Four Hundred who were gracious enough to recognize them. Therefore, every Jewish woman in Mortonville hated Mrs. Max Forman with all her heart, a sentiment the rabbi could hardly condemn, even if it were un-Christian.

But on this occasion Fannie Forman greeted him most cordially, murmured some lovely things Madeline had told her about his lovely play, and left them alone in the great oak-paneled library. The private rehearsal was soon over, for the new Queen Esther had her lines letter perfect and seemed more than willing to chat with the young playwright about his first effort. She seemed to know a good deal about the theater and he listened very respectfully to her words.

"It's the best Purim play I ever read," she told him. "Yes, of course," in answer to his unspoken question, "I'm Jewish . . . and know a little about Purim. Although I'm afraid I've been brought up as heathenishly as Fannie's bringing up her children. I knew Fannie at boarding school; we've kept in touch with each other ever since. She visited me in New York several times, so I stole the time away from my work to spend a few days with her before I go on to California."

"Your work?"

"Never mind. I'm more interested in yours. Do you write much?"

"Not much," confessed the rabbi. "This is my first position and it's taking most of my time learning the ropes. But if you think it's a good play——"

She raised her hands in playful horror; he noticed

that her rings were set in bizarre but not unbeautiful designs. "I said it was a good Purim play; but please don't let me start you on your road of folly by telling you that you can write good plays. It's your first, isn't it? That means nothing; write two, three, a half dozen—burn them all up and begin all over again. If you keep on writing that shows you may have a spark of the divine fire—but I hope for your sake that you haven't. It ought to be much more satisfactory being a rabbi."

"Do you write?" he ventured.

"No. And it's time you went home, young man." He rose, a little hurt at her manner. In Mortonville people treated the rabbi with unfailing respect. "I'm sleepy, and I have to have a good rest if I'm going to star in your play tomorrow night."

To relieve the gentle reader's curiosity, Madeline, as Queen Esther, won every heart. Somehow her playing shed a magic glow over the amateurs about her; not a child forgot his lines; not an actor tripped over his long Persian robes. Everyone agreed with the young rabbi that it was a perfect Purim play presented in a perfect manner. (At least everybody but poor Sylvia, who sniffed rather unpleasantly when her mother read her the glowing press notices from the Mortonville *Morning Journal.* For Sylvia, who had taken elocution lessons from the time she could walk, was inclined to have rather high standards in dramatic art.)

The play had started at nine promptly, ending at eleven-thirty, so there was no time to talk with Madeline after the performance. And when the rabbi called the next morning he was told that she had already left

town. Hurt and perplexed, he asked to see Mrs. Forman. Somehow her greeting jarred upon him. He had always felt that a married woman with children shouldn't try to act playfully with young men, especially young rabbis.

"Madeline told me to say good-by for her," she told him, "and to thank you for your perfectly lovely flowers." (Thieler wondered a little uneasily whether Madeline had found his note inside the box in which he had written somewhat effusively of his "dream Esther—his star for a night.") "She decided to take the early train today instead of leaving Monday. But you know how notional these actresses are."

"Actresses?" stammered the rabbi.

"That's right—she told me you didn't know. Before she came Madeline made me promise not to tell a soul. She said she wanted a good rest—no newspaper publicity—nor entertaining. But," with her hateful air of patronage, "if you went up to New York as often as we do during the theater season you'd have guessed right away."

"I thought I'd seen her picture some place!"

"In some of the magazines, I suppose. I'm going to have it in the *Sunday Star,* too; now that she's gone it won't do any harm and when I get a chance to entertain a celebrity like Mildred Hull, I want the credit for it."

Thieler felt a little dizzy. Mildred Hull—Mildred Hull whom he had never seen on the stage, but had heard rated among the first of American actresses. And she had liked his play!

"Can you give me her address?" he asked briskly.

"I don't think she'd like it; she's sort of peculiar.

Oh, yes—she said I could give you this—it's her favorite picture."

Again Thieler felt a little dizzy. For this was not the conventional half-length which was to appear in the *Sunday Star*, the picture he was to throw away with other dusty newspaper clippings fifteen years after. It was indeed a picture of Madeline, but her tragic mouth was curved into a fond maternal smile and two fine boys, about ten and twelve, respectively, leaned against either shoulder.

"She's awfully proud of them," confided Mrs. Forman. "And," enviously, "don't she look terribly young? It's wonderful how an actress can hide her age."

. . . . .

Rabbi Thieler never found time to write another Purim play, or in fact a play of any description. So, perhaps, he didn't have the divine spark after all.

PATCHWORK

A Social Study

WHEN we were nice little girls in clean white aprons and long smooth braids, our inky fingers often copied with painful exactness a certain truism at the top of the third page of our copy books: "A stitch in time saves nine." We believed it then as nice little girls always believed everything they read in their copy books; now we believe it more than ever after seeing that stupid Seamstress called Society endeavoring to patch hopelessly worn-out material.

. . . . . .

The kitchen which also served as the dining room, parlor and laundry of the Kuppenstein household, as well as bedroom for Moritz and Dan, who slept on a cot in the corner, was crowded almost to suffocation. For the whole family gathered about the supper table, and on a certain July evening presented an animated if not an inspiring picture of Jewish home life as it is sometimes lived a stone's throw from Delancey Street. All of the children were there, from eighteen-year-old Rose, who "worked by a milliner," down to Baby Max fretting in his second-hand high chair. At the head of the oilcloth-covered table sat Ike Kuppenstein, a slumped, perspiring specimen of a pantsmaker after a hot day's work, while Mamma Kuppenstein stood at the sink savagely sawing at the bread she had forgotten to put on the table. None of the six children had of-

fered to get up for her; she had been too busy raising her brood in her own unsystematic way to teach even the girls to do their share in the untidy, overcrowded household.

Suddenly Dan pushed back his plate. "Me and Moritz is going down swimming by the wharves tonight, pa," he told his father. "The cop don't get by till nine o'clock, and if he comes we can sneak behind the lumber." This with the New York street boy's good-natured contempt for the officer of the law.

The father nodded indifferently. Seeing the man slouched in his chair, no one would have suspected that as a boy his prowess as a swimmer in his far-away home across the sea had earned for him the epithet, "goy," from certain elders who deemed it unseemly that a Jewish boy should find any pleasure in the sports of the heathen. Perhaps he had forgotten those long-ago days and did not see the pity of it that his two active youngsters were forced to steal their swim between the round of a stern policeman. But as usual he said nothing.

Fourteen-year-old Mary, a girl of gypsy-like coloring and tangled hair, broke in excitedly: "Take me with you—please. I learned to swim a little at the camp last summer and I'm just roasted to death. Make 'em take me, ma," she pleaded, turning to her mother, who had slumped wearily into the empty chair beside Rose.

"I care lots where you go," answered her mother. She raised a bit of bread to her mouth, then put it down untasted. She had done the family washing that day, mopped the kitchen and tried to comfort the teething baby. Too exhausted to eat, she was scarcely

in a mood to concern herself over Mary's pleasures for the evening. "You can go," she consented dully. "You'd oser take care of the baby for me if you stayed home."

"Pa, tell 'em to take me swimming, too," cried Mary, ignoring the rebuke. "I ain't been swimming all summer 'cause they didn't have no room for me at the free camp again, and you won't give me four dollars to go to the pay one with Lilly Cohen," the child ended accusingly.

"Four dollars—when we're lucky to pay our rent!" For a moment her father was roused from his usual apathy. "I can't buy you shoes and bread and you want vacations in the country like millionaire children. And Rose putting every cent she makes on her back," with a glare for his pretty first-born, who went on eating her supper with elaborate unconcern.

"As long as he don't make me pay board, let him holler," was her inward comment.

"But, pa, don't the boys have to take me swimming?" Mary persisted, glad to drop her unreasonable grievances about camp vacations.

Her father shrugged his indifference. "They can do what they please. I come home and you yell at me for vacations," he answered.

But the two boys were already at the door.

"We ain't going to take her, pa," declared Moritz firmly. "The other fellows 'ud kid us to death if we took a girl along. Anyhow, it wouldn't be nice 'cause nobody don't wear a bathing suit," he added as his most telling argument.

Mary burst into tears as the door slammed behind them. "I don't get to go nowhere," she sobbed. "And

you told me if I got passed at school I'd get a nice vacation."

"Vacation! Always a vacation!" her father mimicked her angrily. "Do I get a vacation if I get so tired working I fall on my face? Nu, and where are you going?" as Rose left the table, unbuttoning her lingerie waist with one hand, fumbling at loose curls with the other.

"Coney. Got to hurry and dress."

"Dress and her Coney Island! That's all she thinks of. It would hurt her once if she washed the dishes when I'm standing on my feet all day," grumbled her mother, as she fed a bit of gravy-soaked bread to the whining baby. "Mary, you got to help me once," but Mary had already followed her sister into the stuffy bedroom the girls occupied with five-year-old Sadie. The little girl stood in the doorway regarding her young lady sister with sullen eyes.

"Going to Coney?" she asked at last, wishing that she was grown up enough to work and buy pink camisoles for herself.

"Heard me say so, didn't you?" Rose looked up from lacing a new pair of oxfords that had cost her almost two weeks' salary. "Lord, I'm sweating! Can hardly wait till I get my clothes off out there and put on a bathing suit." She rose, kicking a sleazy silk petticoat into the corner and took down a satin sport skirt which Mary knew was her best.

"You're going with a fellow," surmised Mary, noting the splendors of Rose's wardrobe.

"Sure; what of it?"

"He'll pay your way, won't he?"

Mary, wise in the precocious wisdom of the East

Side, knew better than to plead to be taken along if Rose's plans included an escort. Once, on a never-to-be-forgotten Sunday, Rose had taken her to that magic land of lights and swings and a beach filled with bathers, and from that day her mouth had fairly watered at the mere sound of that fairy playground.

"Then you won't take me," decided Mary hopelessly.

Rose, picking up her entirely unnecessary lip-stick, gave a short laugh. "Guess I won't have a kid trotting along after me. Aw, for God's sake, stop that bawling," as Mary's lips began to quiver, her eyes to fill, "or I'll tell pa to give you a good licking. What's the matter with you, anyhow?"

"I never get to go no place," sobbed Mary, unable to diagnose her adolescent hysteria as the result of wrong food, stuffy sleeping quarters, too much excitement and too little exercise. "I want to go to Coney and go up in the Wheel and go swimming in the ocean."

"Wait till you get a fellow," advised Rose carelessly. She stopped in her dressing to cast an approving glance at her little sister's lithe figure, just rounding into womanhood, the tangled hair with glints of gold in its brown tendrils, the flushed cheeks and warmly curved lips. "You'll be a winner some day, kiddo," she said with good-natured admiration, "and you'll get all the fellows you want to take you out and buy you things. Just be careful not to be a stick and learn to treat 'em right, that's all."

"What you mean?" Mary, perched on the foot of the rumpled bed, forgot Coney and swimming to listen to the wisdom of her elder sister.

Rose, drawing on a very tight yellow jersey of a

loose weave, gave a knowing little snigger. "Aw, you know what I mean—you've been to enough movies. Let 'em kiss you once in a while and don't yell for the police if they try to hug you. 'Course," with her most worldly air, "you've got to know how far to go. Don't you never let a boy get too fresh with you."

"What you mean?" asked Mary again, a little ashamed although she didn't know why.

Rose was really embarrassed. Somehow she couldn't share the worldly wisdom of the milliner's shop, the nasty stories the girls exchanged over their lunches, with Mary who waited for her answer with big innocent eyes filled with humble admiration. So she spoke almost harshly.

"You ain't old enough to know them things yet."

"That's what ma always says when I ask her," complained Mary.

"She's right. Kids know too darn much nowadays," with the loftiness of all her eighteen years. "Say, this place is stuffy enough without you crowding in, too. Go on out in the kitchen."

Mary crept through the kitchen very softly, lest her mother, trying to quiet the heat-tortured baby, should hear her and stop her to help with the dishes. Down in the teeming street, she wandered from corner to corner, too old to play tag with the children frisking about the gutters, too young to go out with fellows, like Rose. But, standing before the lurid posters of a picture house, she noticed a boy about Rose's age standing at the door beside the ticket box. She didn't like his eyes; somehow they made her afraid; but she suddenly remembered her big sister's counsel. If she couldn't go swimming with her brothers, or have

a week at camp, or go to Coney—well, decided Mary in her starving little soul, she'd go to see a movie for nothing once in a while, anyhow.

So she raised her eyes, deep and hungry, to the young man's shifting ones; then dropped the heavy lids with a smile far more provocative than she herself dreamed. The ticket taker moved toward her. "Want to come in and see the show?" he invited. "There ain't much of a crowd tonight. Everybody's gone to Coney." . . . Later, when the two stood drinking highly-colored sodas at a corner stand, Mary decided that she'd ask him to take her to Coney, too. Didn't Rose say any fellow would be good to you if you treated him right?

. . . . .

Last week we had a little talk with Mr. Kuppenstein in the pretty little office of a certain Home where sixteen-year-old Mary had gone to bear her baby. The shrunken, dejected pantsmaker was more weary and apologetic than ever as he explained why they could not help their daughter in her trouble.

"No, she wasn't a bad girl," he told us, "till she got running out nights. I licked her but it didn't do no good. She was crazy over the boys. And we don't want her home now—we can't have the neighbors talking. My Rose's engaged to a grand young man now and it would be terrible for her."

His discouraged eyes wandered through the open door into the living room, cheerful with plants and pictures, the walls lined with books; beyond one caught glimpses of the nursery for the unwanted babies, all white tile and sunshine, with a blue and white uni-

formed nurse passing between the little beds. His lips twisted into an ironical smile.

"Our baby died two summers ago," he said, slowly. "We had no good air by our house and ice cost too much and the milk got bad sometimes. Sometime it is better to be—like hers—and live out in the country and get clean milk and have a nurse look after you. It is all crazy, ain't it?"

He rose to go, his eyes still hungrily devouring the pleasant living room which Mary and the other unmarried girl-mothers enjoyed so much when they came to the Home to bear their illegitimate babies. For a moment he struggled for the right words to say, for he was a man long used to silent thinking.

At last: "Maybe you don't know what I mean, and I know you ladies all got good hearts, and God knows where Mary would be if you didn't take her in and the baby. But it's all patchwork. I sew pants and I know if a thread's loose or a seam's open, you just take a needle and a stitch or two—and it's finished. But you got to do it in time. It ain't so expensive like waiting till a piece is all holes and you put patches on it that don't always do no good. Like my Mary."

He paused again, groping for his words. "Yes, patchwork," he repeated dully. "My Mary wanted to swim and go to the country where she wouldn't go to bum picture shows all the time. But it cost too much for me to send her and they didn't have no room for her in the free camp. But ain't it going to cost you more to take care of her here when she gets sick, and, maybe, keep her baby if nobody wants it? . . . I ain't no millionaire, but I want my children to grow right—and they can't in the streets. And now my

littlest girl Sadie begs the life out of me to send her to the country like Mary used to. Maybe I can fix it a week—and the rest of the summer she plays in the street and loafers talk to her and make her bad." His voice shook with sudden passion. "Say, ain't anybody going to look after her neither 'til she gets bad like Mary—and has to come out here!"

BIRDS OF A FEATHER

An Adventure of a Converted Jewess

"FINE feathers," says the old fable, "make fine birds," and Mrs. Seymore Coleman in all the glory of her spring raiment was a very fine bird indeed. Her hat, with its triumphant bird of paradise, might have delighted the heart of any female angel, no matter how far removed from mundane vanities; her oxfords and gloves were perfection in their immaculate grayness; best of all, her spring suit, with its exclusive label beneath the collar, lifted her gently from the hundred and sixty into the hundred and forty-five pound class. A miracle that several months of reluctant and spasmodic dieting had failed to accomplish.

But although she stood before her mirror arrayed like a feminine Solomon in all her glory, Mrs. Seymore Coleman was not happy. Her lips puckered in a not unbecoming pout; her large black eyes all but overflowed with tears—almost, but not quite. For what lady will ever allow her cheeks to become tear-stained, her nose shiny with emotion, after she has carefully powdered for church?

Yes, Mrs. Coleman was going to church. She stopped long enough at the door of her husband's den to throw him a good-morning as he sat engulfed by the billows of his scattered Sunday papers; then, with a snap to the top button of her gloves and a twitch to her veil, she tripped down the front stairs of her neat

little house in the fashionable fifties, shedding a fragrance of violet perfume and unaffected piety as she moved.

The spring sun was shining gloriously; Mrs. Coleman was glad that she had not ordered the car; a walk down Fifth Avenue under the benediction of the May sun was as good for her soul as for her figure. It was hard to feel depressed as she moved along with the stream of church-goers that flowed down Fifth, no longer a mart crowded with luxury shops and lovely ladies wistful to buy, but in its Sabbath mood of devout men and women, who, though clad in their best, walked humbly before their Maker. Even the fussy taxis puffed in a more decorous key as all New York went to church to pray, bringing the week-day rags and tags, the Devil's leavings, as oblation to a week-end God.

Mrs. Seymore Coleman walked with the rest, prayer book carried in delicately gloved hands, eyes cast down demurely as they surveyed her chaste corsage of ophelia rose buds and lilies of the valley. She sighed as she stopped for a moment before a florist's window to gaze upon the flaunting yellows and pinks of spring blooms, and to adjust her veil in a convenient mirror. For Mrs. Coleman knew now what it was to enter a florist's and order her own flowers. To be sure, dear Sam—Seymore, rather!—never grumbled over the size of her monthly bills for flowers; in fact, he never grumbled at all any more, even when he saw her leaving for church on a Sabbath morning. But Mrs. Coleman, remembering how often he had sent her blossoms during their engagement—those lean years when a corsage for his sweetheart meant several sim-

plified meals for a young broker's clerk—sighed over the passing of youth and romance.

"I wonder whether we weren't just as happy when I did my own housework up in Harlem," mused Mrs. Coleman. "I got terribly tired, and the neighbor women were awfully vulgar and hung out of their windows all day and forgot to comb their hair half the time—but they were neighborly. Especially when little Estelle had whooping cough and I thought I was going to lose her."

A smile of almost vulgar triumph wreathed the lady's features. For Estelle, at least, had not disappointed her. As the Colemans had advanced in worldly prosperity, the little daughter had risen far above and out of her parents' sphere; now Mrs. Coleman visited her daughter and her son-in-law only on state occasions; yet she was not too unhappy over the chasm which separated her from her own flesh and blood. On the contrary, she sometimes bragged to her few acquaintances of her daughter's patrician exclusiveness; for Estelle's dowry had bought her a place in one of the very first families of old New York, a mystically closed circle into which she had no intention of dragging her plebeian parents.

"It's hard enough for me to get anywhere," she complained to her mother more than once as soon as the raptures of the honeymoon were over. "My looks always give me away—and most of Van's people seem to think I wear horns under my marcel. Of course, they come to our place when we invite them, but it's like pulling teeth to get them to entertain me properly. And, by the way, mamma, tell papa not to give me any more jewelry for my birthday. My diamonds

look pretty vulgar, anyway, and I'd rather have a check. It costs money to entertain Van's people."

Being a devoted mother, Mrs. Coleman told herself that everything was for the best. If her darling Estelle had climbed heights too giddy for her own parents to scale, why shouldn't she be content to stay down in the valley—and read about Estelle's parties in the society columns of the *Times*? And when a reproduction of Estelle in evening dress, mostly shoulders and a frozen smile, appeared among certain social leaders of the season, Mrs. Coleman's heart was too full for words. It was worth seeing Estelle very seldom, and never at one of the big affairs when her husband's aristocratic relatives were present; for her daughter had "arrived" and Mrs. Coleman's one duty on earth was ended.

But, unfortunately, the mother bird must continue to flutter along her uninspired way, even after the fledgling leaves the nest. Mrs. Coleman was still well under fifty; there was no housework to do, since three maids and a man helped to keep the household machinery in the home up in the fashionable fifties running without a single creak. She hated needlework and she had never cared for reading; unfortunately she was just a few years too old to enter club work or social service, the panacea of the modern woman whose house and children no longer need her daily care. While Coleman had always been a solitary beast, working like a devil incarnate all day and coming home at night to drowse over his paper or game of solitaire—a successful broker, but not a congenial housemate. No wonder that poor Mrs. Coleman, thoroughly bored, took to religion!

Not that Mrs. Coleman called her initiation into Saint John's most exclusive cult "getting religion." She explained it all to her husband, very prettily and at some length, and he listened with an occasional grunt, whether of scorn or approval it was hard to say, and at the end he told her, as usual, "to go ahead." But sometimes a lady when talking even to her own husband doesn't tell him the whole truth and nothing but the truth. Mrs. Coleman insisted that she would feel more at home at Saint John's than in the synagogue which she had attended once or twice a year in her girlhood. She neglected to add that some of the very nicest people in New York attended Saint John's and that her membership in that select body might form a sort of Jacob's Ladder on which she might mount to that heavenly circle where Estelle and her husband's family lived and had their being.

Strangely enough, the select members of Saint John's did not rise in a body and bid her welcome. Mrs. Coleman was irreproachable in character and her manners did not offend even her hypercritical daughter; she was fairly well educated and knew when to hold her tongue, which in social circles is sometimes a much greater advantage than a college degree; while to one and every church charity she gave as freely as she dared, checks large enough to be called generous—but not of such liberal amounts that a caviling critic could call her ostentatious. Yet Mrs. Coleman did not seem to get on at Saint John's.

So far no one had called upon her but the rector; at the various church affairs which she attended with all the conscientious zeal of a convert, the church members were polite but not cordial; she was never

asked to serve on committees, even to pass tea and wafers after the thimble parties, where she sewed more flannel petticoats for the heathen than any other two ladies. Really desperate, she had suggested to the rector that she would not resent from the pews a little of the Christian charity he so frequently preached from the pulpit. The good man seemed somewhat embarrassed, but promised to do his best.

So it was more than the balmy spring sunshine that kindled new hopes within Mrs. Coleman's genteel breast. The rector had insinuated when she had met him at a Bible study class the day before that one of the very loveliest ladies of his congregation had expressed a desire to meet her. Mrs. Coleman would be at Sabbath morning services, of course? So would Mrs. Ireson. If Mrs. Coleman would detain him a moment after the benediction, he was sure she would enjoy meeting Mrs. Ireson, a really delightful person, and so cultured. Mrs. Coleman could have kissed him! She felt like a traveler—say, in Italy—who hears a bit of Broadway slang and catches a whiff of honest-to-God American coffee.

Sunday morning services at Saint John's had drawn to their decorous close. The rector advanced toward the expectant Mrs. Coleman, a slender, distinguished woman in his wake, a most delightful lady, who murmured the proper thing when presented, then flushed a dull red under her cobwebby veil as she scanned Mrs. Coleman's face. And Mrs. Coleman, after the first swift glance, blushed also. It takes a thief to catch a thief, a Jew to unmask another Jew. After the first swift surveyal of the member so graciously eager to make her feel at home at Saint John's, Mrs.

Seymore Coleman felt certain that her husband's birth name must have been something like Isaacs.

The rector passed on and left them together, two birds of a feather who had found each other out in all that alien flock. Mrs. Ireson, with a smile that was gently satiric, looked after him. "Poor dear, he does try so hard to do the right thing," she murmured tactfully.

But Mrs. Coleman felt anything but tactful; the last spark of hope had died in her breast; the beauty of the spring day had grown stale and chill. "I didn't have to depend on him to introduce me to Jews," she said.

Mrs. Ireson (née something very much like Isaacs) smiled her slow, gentle smile. "He tried to be nice to me at the same time," she explained. "I've been coming here almost five years and nobody will take me up. But he didn't expect you to be prejudiced!"

"I'm not!" A very human look flashed across the Sunday make-up of Mrs. Coleman's plump face. "I'm tickled to death to meet somebody here who doesn't think she's better than I am, and that she's doing me a favor to talk to me a minute about the weather or to ask me for a contribution to the Mite Society. I'd like to know you real well. Maybe you could come and have dinner with us some time; it's been getting awfully lonesome since Estelle left us."

"I'd like to very much," Mrs. Ireson responded heartily. "I've been boarding ever since my poor husband selig died and I do get hungry for a homemade meal."

Mrs. Coleman flushed guiltily. "I've not been in my kitchen for months," she confessed, "but I'm a good

cook if I do have to say so myself. My poor Sam says it don't taste like home cooking any more since we hire everything done. But if you come over next week some night I'll give the cook a day off and cook you a meal nobody'll be ashamed of. What would you like?"

"I haven't eaten sauer brauten and potato dumplings for I don't know when," sighed Mrs. Ireson. "And my poor husband selig was so fond of it."

"Mr. Cohen likes it too," answered Mrs. Coleman, stumbling a bit over the all too common name, discarded while Estelle was still in finishing school. "And so do I, but it's terrible fattening. How do you make yours?"

Deep in the mystic ways of preparing sauer brauten, Mrs. Isaacs and Mrs. Cohen walked down the dim, refined aisles of Saint John's—together.

A SON OF PHARAOH

A Minor Tragedy of the Exodus

SEPHI was the first-born son of Pharaoh and the darling of his father's heart. For he was tall and as beautiful as the boy god Horus and his laugh was like music and those who looked upon his shining face forgot their burdens and called down blessings upon his head. Since the world was made, there was no youth more fortunate than Sephi, who loved bright colors and pleasant music and the odor of flowers in his garden, and the perfumes and myrrh which the dark merchant-men brought to Egypt in their caravans across the burning desert sands.

All who looked upon Sephi loved him because of his beauty and his grace and his laughter which caused even the bowed slaves of Israel to forget their burdens in the brickyards as he passed. They toiled beneath the burning sun and knew the red whips of their task-masters; he rode by, reclining on silken cushions in his litter, born by mighty black slaves, who brushed away the flies with great fans of peacock feathers, and offered him iced sherbets in goblets of wrought gold. But the slaves of Israel dared not pause in their labors to cool their throats, which burned from the heat of the cruel sun and the dust of the bricks which they made, even when they grew faint and dizzy and could not see the bricks which they piled without ceasing. For they labored for

Pharaoh and their toil brought him much revenue, so he had no need to deny himself any pleasure his heart desired. Nor did he stint his son Sephi in the desires of his heart, for he dearly loved Sephi, who was his first-born and a youth of such beauty as the world had never seen before.

When Sephi was but a little child, toddling about the lily-bordered lakes of his grandfather's cool gardens, he had ever left his play to walk beside a grave-eyed youth who wore the livery of the court. The half-grown lad was the foster-son of Sephi's aunt, the princess Bithiah, and because she had rescued him from the waters when he was but a little child, she had named him Moses. Rumor had it that Moses was a Hebrew child, doomed to death in earlier years by Pharaoh's hard decree that no Hebrew boy should be allowed to live. And some added that his mother had set the child afloat on the river Nile in a frail basket made of rushes, which the handmaidens of the princess Bithiah had brought ashore when the princess had come down to the river to bathe. But for all that, the lad was treated like a son of the house of Pharaoh, and Sephi looked upon him as a beloved brother.

Often they walked together in the cool of Pharaoh's gardens, and Moses told the child wondrous tales his own nurse Jochebed had told him in his own childhood. Stories of Abraham, the father of her race, and Jacob, who was a prince in his own land, although today all men looked upon his people, the Hebrews, as a slave nation. She had told him, too, that some day a Deliverer would rise in Egypt and lead the wretched ones of Israel into their own land. And little

Sephi would listen as a child always must listen to marvelous tales and would cry out for more stories; but at this point Moses would look far off with eyes that seemed to see nothing, and he would fall into a strange silence.

Those were pleasant days in the garden of Pharaoh and they passed all too soon. And now others told Sephi tales of wonder and glory, for Moses no longer walked with him in the fragrant gardens. Sephi heard whispers that a sudden madness had seized his aunt's foster son; that filled with a strange fury, Moses had slain an Egyptian task-master and had fled from court. Some hinted that Moses had sought to save a Hebrew slave from punishment, but few believed so foolish a tale. For Moses had always been considered a son of Egypt and why should he have raised a hand to aid a wretched Israelite?

So the boy with the grave eyes and strange spells of silence passed out of Sephi's mind and he forgot him for a while as all children learn to forget. And others took the place of his one companion, sons of the noblemen of Pharaoh's court, princely boys who were born to rule and seldom thought of the humble ones of Egypt, those who hewed wood or carried water or tilled the soil that the nobles might eat and be satisfied. And they thought least of all of the slaves who toiled for long hours beneath the burning sun in the brickyards of Pharaoh, their life-blood dripping upon the bricks which they made that Pharaoh might have much revenue, and his heir Sephi might sleep upon silken cushions and spend idle days in the palace gardens with the companions whom he loved.

The gardens of Pharaoh were a pleasant place and

no ugly thing disturbed their beauty. Blue and white lilies grew about the cool lakes; birds of gorgeous color flitted among the trees. They sang from dawn until sunset, but their music was no sweeter than the sound of lutes the companions of Sephi played to bring him joy, or Sephi's own laughter as he tossed his golden ball or raced along the smooth white paths. The gardens were a pleasant place and he loved them so much he seldom cared to go out into the world. And when he was carried through the street in his litter borne by mighty black slaves, he learned to close his eyes that they might not fall upon anything wretched or ugly. And so passionately did he come to love beauty and to hate ugliness and pain that he forbade those about him to speak of the sorrows of the great world which began at the garden gates and stretched far beyond the stifling brickyards where the wretched Hebrews toiled from dawn till night.

No one was allowed to speak a harsh or ugly word before Sephi, so he dreamed that the hearts of all men were as gentle as his own; there was no violence in his garden kingdom and he believed that all men ruled as he did, even by love. Because when a companion sickened he was at once banished from Sephi's court, the boy could not conceive of disease; so hard did Pharaoh strive to blind the eyes of the beloved child to the harsh things of this earth, where sorrow comes even to kings, that he ordered the prince's slaves to go through the darkness every night, carrying torches and plucking every flower and leaf that had withered, lest the boy might learn of death and decay. And Sephi laughed on, happy as the boy god Horus in all his shining beauty.

But one morning he found in the garden path a tiny bird that had fallen from its nest and had been crushed by the stones on the path below. And he grieved sorely over the little body which lay still warm in his fingers. But his attendants took it away quickly and told him the bird was asleep. So, through their watchfulness, Sephi never learned of the thing other men call death. . . . And on that very day his old companion, Moses, came to court.

To Sephi in his prison gardens came no word of the prayers Moses laid before his father, Pharaoh. The boy did not know how wretched were the Hebrew slaves who toiled in the brickyards for his father's sake. He did not even know that Moses had returned from a far-off land and sought to save his unhappy people. For Pharaoh forbade the prince's companions and attendants to speak of Moses to Sephi on pain of death; he could deny the lad nothing, and he was loath to have his son ask for the companionship of Moses, now a confessed Hebrew and little better than a slave.

So Moses pleaded in vain before Pharaoh, and Sephi, playing in his garden, never heard his voice above the murmur of the lutes his companions played and the songs which they sang for his pleasure.

In the records of Egypt it is written of the many wonders the man Moses wrought before Pharaoh, bringing plagues upon the land, filling the souls of the people with fear. But Pharaoh, his heart strangely hardened, although his councilors were mad with terror, would not allow the slaves of Israel to depart from Egypt. For he had grown rich from their toil and he knew that he would miss their revenue. And, although he was no longer a young man and knew that soon

he would sleep beside his fathers, he thought of his dear son, Sephi, and dreaded lest the departure of these Hebrew workmen should lessen the boy's inheritance. So he hardened his heart against the words of Moses and the strange afflictions Moses had brought upon the land, and would not let Israel go.

In the records of the Hebrews it is written that one day as a Hebrew mother toiled in the brickyards, the babe who was her first-born died on her breast. But the overseer would not give her time to bury it, but ordered it walled in the monument her bleeding hands had helped to build. Then the weeping mother sought Moses and told him her tale. And he wept with her, but when he went before Pharaoh all gentleness had died from his eyes and his face was so terrible with wrath that the guards who stood at the door of Pharaoh's palace trembled with fear and allowed him to pass.

Then Moses stood before Pharaoh and told him the tale of the Hebrew mother and her babe and bade him have mercy upon Israel. . . . And Pharaoh laughed. So Moses gathered his robes about him and left Pharaoh sitting upon his throne.

That night there was great lamentation in the land of Egypt, a wailing that seemed to reach the stars. In the huts of peasants, in the courts of the temples, in the palaces of the nobles of Egypt, the humble and the mighty together wailed their dead. For the hand of God had fallen heavily upon the blood-stained land of Egypt and in every home save the houses of the oppressed Israelites, the first-born lay cold in death.

In the gardens of Pharaoh where he had been stricken, lay Sephi, the first-born of Pharaoh, the rose

wreath still unwithered about his shining head. His hands were still filled with the flowers his young companions had plucked for him that day, those princely boys, the first-born of their fathers, now sleeping the sleep of death beside his couch. Their fathers, the highest noblemen of Egypt, wept aloud and beat their breasts; but Pharaoh, sitting among them in his royal robes, his crown of twisted gold about his brows, did not weep. The blow had fallen too quickly for him to realize as yet that his beloved son whose day had been all sunshine and music had been the first to perish. He could not understand that he who had forbidden sorrow to enter the palace gardens was now powerless to wrest his first-born from the strong arms of the Angel of Death.

While amid the Hebrews who made ready to depart from Egypt stood Moses, and his heart was high with hope. Yet he wept as he remembered the little child with whom he had often walked beside the lily-bordered lakes in Pharaoh's gardens.

DAWN THROUGH THE DARKNESS

The Story of a Russian Passover

SHE sat on one of the long benches at Ellis Island, a bundle wrapped in a shawl at her feet. Her face was unwrinkled, but her eyes were the eyes of a very old woman and her abundant hair was streaked with gray. And this is the story she told me in a heavy monotone, her hands making plaits in her skirt as she spoke.

Three times the armies came over us, plowing through the streets like a plow in the springtime—so. First the Germans and then the Russians and then the Germans again. Was it better when the Germans were there? Ach, it is never good to be a Jew, and in wartime every heart is as hard as a stone. The last time they drove us out and burned every house and synagogue and overturned the stones in the Beth Hayim for they seemed to hate even our dead and wanted to shame them in their death. I think all of us would have been glad to lie down and rest there, but they drove us out into the roads. We did not know where to go or where we could find rest. Our old rabbi—he was the only man they had not taken for the army, except Mendel, who is blind, and a few old men almost too weak to crawl after us—our old rabbi tried to cheer us as we went along; but his heart was broken and he was among the first to die.

Erev Pesach we were still on the roads. It was a mild evening and I could smell spring in the air. We rested in a field and divided the little bread we still carried; Mendel said it was no sin, because we were starving and our children were crying for food. Once Miriam, the shochet's wife, spoke of last Pesach. God knows we had all been poor enough then, with sometimes scarcely more than a loaf of bread for Shabbas; but at Pesach there had been matzos and raisin wine for every Seder. Reb Nathan never forgot a single Jewish soul at Pesach; he was a rich man, but he lost all when the war came, and if he had lived to be with us that night under the sky, it would have torn his heart to hear the children begging for another mouthful; he had never closed his hand even when he grew as poor as the rest of us.

We could not bear to listen to Miriam, the shochet's wife. How could anyone dare to hope that another Pesach would find us at Seder again? Out there in the fields every heart was as black as night; we could believe in the Angel of Death that flew over the housetops, but we would never again open our doors with hopeful hearts and wait for Elijah to come in.

I did not think of all this that erev Pesach by the roadside. God knows I have had plenty of time since —to think and to try to forget. Sometimes it is hard to sleep and then I dream—and it is hardest when I dream of my sister Bashe.

There were just two of us, Bashe and I. I was much older than Bashe; I think she was only four or five when I married. I was barren and she seemed more like my own child than my sister. When my husband died she came to live with me, and when she

herself married, just a little before the war began, the three of us went on living together, which was good fortune for them, poor things! Moshe's father had left him a shop; but he had no head for business and it was I that kept their store. Moshe liked to sit with his big books all day; I think he must have been a poor soldier, but they took him along with the rest. He was one of the first to be shot; poor Moshe, he was a Schlemiel, but he had a heart of gold and he would have done his best for Bashe and the little one, if things had not gone wrong for all of us.

More than once, when Bashe fell by the road, I wondered whether she would ever rise again, for she was never strong, and as her time grew shorter, I feared to see her die before my face. How could I hope that she would ever rise from her child-bed or that the child would be born alive?

Near midnight on erev Pesach, there in the fields underneath the sky, Bashe's pains came upon her and I held her child in my arms. I think I felt like a real grandmother then; for Bashe was like my own daughter. Before I gave him to Taube to wash and care for I saw that he was very beautiful. They used to say over there that there was never a woman like me for tending a mother and all who knew me always called me to come when a child was to be helped into the world; I have stood beside many a bed and held many a newborn baby in my arms, but never have I seen a child as strong and as beautiful as the boy my sister bore beside the road.

Just before she died, Bashe asked to see her baby, and as she held him she told me to name him Moshe, after his dead father. The next day we started on our

way again, not knowing where to go. I carried Bashe's child in my arms, and Grenda, whose little one had died a few days before, fed it at her breast and sobbed as she told me that she wished she might have been taken instead of my sister. For, she said, what good can come to this little orphan in a world of strangers? Once blind Mendel groped his way toward me and felt the child's face with his long fingers. Then he stared before him without speaking until I became afraid. At last he said: "Born on erev Pesach—and she bade you call him Moshe! Is it for a sign? I cannot see your face, but I can see the path that lies before him. When the days were blackest in Egypt, then Moshe Rabbenu brought us light. It is black enough now for the Meshiach to come."

Those were his words and I cannot forget them. My mother once told me that some day a Jewish woman will bear a child, and he will be the Meshiach and bring an end to all our troubles. Then how can I help but wonder. . . .

No, I do not know where my sister's son is today. Why should I tell you how it came to pass? It would seem too wild, too much like one of my own black dreams for you to believe me. They say that such things do not happen in America. But over there . . .

After many days we came to a small settlement of our people. They, too, were suffering from the war, but at least they still had roofs over their heads and crusts of bread to eat. They shared with us, for every Jew is your brother at such a time, and we thought at last we had found a little rest. But we were like drowning men trying to escape from the sea. We thought we had found a dry rock, but even there a

great wave came and swept us away. There were more soldiers; it was like the days when they drove us from our homes—only more terrible. They burned the houses over our heads and drove us to where long trains stood; there they herded us behind the locked doors like so much cattle sent to the market. There was wailing and cursing and struggling; the soldiers pushed us before them; children were torn from their parents, and—yes, I see you looking beneath my shawl. . . . I am not sitting with empty arms like that woman over there, because my children died of hunger before we found a safe place; I never had a child to die. And my sister's son—the one she called Moshe—he whom blind Mendel saw would lead us out of the darkness. . . .

(She broke off suddenly, staring before her, a flickering light glimmering beneath the dim weariness of her eyes.)

How can I believe that he is dead? He was torn from me that day and it would be easier to find a speck of dust that the wind has blown about than to find my sister's child. But my heart tells me that somewhere some Jewish mother feeds him and keeps him warm. As God hears me, the child must live until he has done all that blind Mendel prophesied. He said that help for Israel would come in the night season. Tell me, could any hour be blacker than that night when I first held Bashe's child? Could the Name have chosen a better time to send us the dawn?

TWENTY YEARS AFTER

When Is the Jew Welcome?

MIRIAM DAVIDSON smiled reminiscently as she loosened her furs and looked about the reception room of Miss Darwin's very select school for very select young ladies. It was sure proof of her old school's social superiority that so little had changed during the twenty years since her own graduation: the same substantial mid-Victorian furniture, the high bookcases with their mellowed sets of the classics, the marble busts of Shakespeare and Daniel Webster, all were still in their accustomed places. The curtains and rugs, Mrs. Davidson knew, must have been replaced, not once but several times; yet even they bore a striking resemblance to the furnishings of her own school days.

But time deals less gently with us humans, and when Miss Darwin herself entered the room, Miriam was shocked to see what a change the years had wrought in her old school mistress; Miss Darwin's hair had grayed, there were wrinkles in her patrician face; her figure once attractively slender had grown angular. Even her easy poise of manner was gone; she seemed distinctly nervous as she greeted her former pupil.

"It was good of you to come," she began almost nervously as soon as they had shaken hands.

"You see, I'm buying Beatrice's winter things in

New York, so I thought it better to run up here and see you instead of wiring you about the child," answered Miriam. "That's why I didn't bring her with me today. I wanted to have a good talk with you first; when I bring her next week to be enrolled for the winter term——"

"I am sure your little daughter must be just as lovely and intelligent as you were at fourteen, when you entered our school," murmured Miss Darwin, with what Miriam sensed was a sort of painful politeness. She stared at her old friend a little doubtfully.

"I'm sure you'll all like her," she agreed heartily. "Even if you do find her a little spoiled. She's our only child and her father and I have made a great pet of her. She's never attended school before—a governess except when we've been traveling in Europe, and special instruction in languages and music. We think she's rather talented for her age."

"I am sure of it," agreed Miss Darwin, but her tone was less hearty than her words.

"You know I've been living in California since my marriage," Miriam went on, "so I've never been able to attend any of the class reunions. But I've never forgotten what a wonderful four years I spent here," her eyes wandering through the French windows to the well-kept grounds and the river beyond, so remindful of days of skating and canoeing. "That's why as soon as Beatrice was born I entered her name and that's why I am willing to give her up to come here. I know how much you can do for her."

Miss Darwin cleared her throat uneasily; a slight flush crept over her highbred features. "I know your loyalty toward our school, Miriam," she said, "and

it has always touched me. Some of our girls do not remember for—how long is it since your graduation? —yes, yes, for twenty years. Your little notes on my birthday have meant as much, I want you to believe, as your liberal checks for our new library and our memorial fountain. That's why I wish you hadn't decided to enter your daughter this winter."

"But, why——?"

"For the last five years," Miss Darwin told her with painful precision, "it has been the policy of the Darwin School not to admit girls of the Hebrew faith."

Miriam stared at her with disbelieving eyes.

"But, Miss Darwin, you knew I was a Jewish girl and I always felt I was welcome here."

"That was twenty years ago," was the dry answer, "and things have changed a good deal since then. We have felt it necessary to make this rule to—well, to protect the daughters of our other patrons."

There was a dangerous glitter in Miriam's eyes; but her voice was very calm. "I wish you'd explain just what you mean," she said.

Again Miss Darwin cleared her throat uneasily. Sometimes it is rather disconcerting to have the impulsive, warm-hearted little schoolgirl you remember come back to confront you as a well-poised woman of the world. But she did not flinch.

"I don't think I need to tell you, Miriam," she said, "that some of your people are not—what shall I call it?—cultured. They have acquired enough wealth lately to pay our rather high tuition fees here; but their daughters lack certain qualities we expect of our girls. They are—I regret to say it, but I am sure you wish me to speak frankly—these girls are often im-

possibly crude and nearly always ostentatious. And we must keep our atmosphere here free from vulgarity at all costs."

"By all means!" Miriam's low voice had hardened a little. "But don't you remember Lillian Norris who had a room next to mine while I was here? Her father was a Western oil millionaire or something like that, and poor Lillian was—well, a little crude, wasn't she? But I believe she stayed here four years and graduated with honors. We couldn't help loving her, even if she was a little different, she was so jolly and sincere. And wasn't my roommate, Laura Robertson, somewhat ostentatious?" Miriam laughed, but her laughter rang a little forced. "I wonder how many Jewish girls you've had here had to be disciplined oftener than poor old Laura for using perfume or wearing all her rings to church, or——"

Miss Darwin raised a restraining hand. "My dear Miriam," she protested. "It is not like you to be so unjust. I agree with you that sometimes our Christian girls even here are lacking in the culture and refinement that wealth and family are supposed to insure. I needn't tell you how much I admire your people and how many Jews I consider as my very best friends. Your dear father, for example, who was so generous when we built the new dormitories. But, my dear child, I have to consider my patrons. I regret as deeply as you do that in the last few years there has risen—shall I call it prejudice?—against your wonderful people. Some of my patrons have told me very frankly that they do not care to send their daughters in the most suggestible years of their young lives to a school where they will mingle with Jewish girls. An unreasonable prejudice, of course, but I cannot afford

to lose valued patrons. I am sure you understand, don't you?"

"I certainly do understand," Miriam Davidson answered quietly. "Only I'm afraid that Beatrice will be terribly disappointed. For the last eight years I've promised to send her to my own old school—and I'll have to go back to New York and tell her this."

Miss Darwin caught her two hands. "My dear child," she exclaimed a little too warmly, "I hope you don't think for a minute that our new ruling applies to your own lovely little daughter. We will certainly welcome Beatrice next term and do our best to make her happy here. And if there is the slightest objection to our making an exception in her case, I have only to say that she was registered on our list a long time before our new ruling was even thought of."

Miriam's lips trembled. "That is very dear of you, Miss Darwin," she answered. "But it would be impossible to send my daughter here under such conditions. Beatrice is a proud little thing, and if she were ever to learn that she was here on sufferance—as an exception—she would never forgive me. Please take her name off the roll at once, Miss Darwin, and I'm sorry I've taken so much of your time. Good-by."

But Miss Darwin detained her. "My dear Miriam," she remonstrated in gentle reproach, "I can't have you go off like this—angry at me and your Alma Mater, too! I assure you that Beatrice will never feel the slightest discrimination—especially when it becomes known that she is the granddaughter of one of the donors of our new dormitories. And, being your daughter, she will make friends easily, for there never

can exist the slightest prejudice against the better type of Jewish girls."

"I'm afraid, Miss Darwin," Miriam told her with rather dangerous gentleness, "that we will never understand each other on this point. I don't know just what you mean by the better type of Jewish girls—and I don't want to. If your school—my dear old Darwin School—won't take in every Jewish girl as it takes every gentile girl for what she is—and for nothing else—I couldn't trust my daughter to come here. Crudity and vulgarity are dangerous, but I'd rather have her exposed to them in a less exclusive school than to run the risk of having her come home in four years an incurable social snob."

She opened her check book, drew out her ink pencil and looked about the writing table for a blotter. "Thank you," as Miss Darwin handed her one; "here is my annual check for the professors' pension fund. I'll keep on sending it every year, of course, for the sake of old times—if you'll let me. I am sure my money will be just as welcome as you assured me my daughter would be," she wanted to add, but bit back the satiric words.

"I have always numbered you as one of my few girls who have never forgotten their old teachers here and what we owe to them," Miss Darwin told her, after a covert glance to assure herself that the check was just as large as on former occasions.

"And she'll keep on answering all of our appeals," Miss Darwin told her confidential secretary a few hours later, as they discussed enrollments for the mid-winter terms. "Especially after I urged her to let us make an exception of her daughter and take her in

as a favor. It was a risk to suggest it, of course, but I remembered how high-spirited Miriam used to be—and I was right. But it would have been awkward if she'd have accepted."

"Oh, don't feel so cut up about it," Miriam's husband consoled her about the same time. "There are other good schools—and you know it."

Miriam's eyes filled with tears. "I know now there are much better schools for Beatrice," she answered. "And that's what hurts me so much. Ever since I was fourteen I've always thought the Darwin School was the finest school in the world."

A CEMETERY JEW

The Queer Fate of a Jewish Skeptic

IT all happened between the panic of the Chicago fire and the gilded glories of the World's Fair. A handful of Chicago Jews, blown by the winds of fortune from every corner of the globe, had founded a little congregation in that city some years before, and Abram Epstein belonged to it, less through piety than his inherited desire to rest in a Jewish cemetery after his death.

For Abram Epstein had long ceased to be a faithful Jew according to the tenets of his European fathers. He had actually shaved off his ear-locks before embarking for America, at the pier he had shed his long coat and yelled "hello" to the Landsmann who waited for him at the lower end of the gangplank; peddling through the Illinois countryside, it became very easy to forget certain food taboos, although Abram, as he once shamefacedly confessed to a friendly farmer entertaining him at dinner, couldn' t ever learn to stomach pork. For a few months he carried about at the bottom of his bag a worn Sidur; this he soon packed away with the grave clothes his girl wife had sewed for him before their marriage. Abram had long ago ceased to lament that she had died in childbed with the puny infant who had followed her a few days later; for he felt certain she would never have felt at home in this strange America.

But Abram himself was the sort of immigrant who takes to Americanization as a duck to water. The few English words he had learned on shipboard were soon supplemented with a vocabulary vigorous and slangy and extensive enough to cover the needs of a business man, although Abram never lost his accent until the day of his death. His Sabbath observances he had laid aside with his European clothes and earlocks. It was hard enough to squeeze out a few pennies profit from the thrifty farm wives who haggled with him at their kitchen doors over buttons and thread and calico; how could he afford to lose a day's profit every Saturday?

"And what do I do if I don't work on Shabbas?" he once told his conscience. "It ain't possible for an active man like me to sit by the road and daven all day by myself."

Nor did Abram visit the synagogue even when he found himself in Chicago on a Saturday. Judaism, he was beginning to feel, was all right for foreigners. But how could a business man, prosperous and up to date, find edification in the long prayers in the antiquated language of his dead ancestors? As for the new rabbi they had hired and widely advertised as being modern and American—well, Abram could tell him a thing or two himself. A rabbi was all right to marry and bury people and teach their children, if they had any, but further than that Abram didn't see anything in the whole outlandish business.

But, of course, he belonged to the synagogue. He knew he had to if he wanted to be buried in the cemetery which the congregation had purchased for their members. Abram prided himself upon his modernity,

his liberalism, but he didn't like to feel that he might be buried with goyim. He was willing to meet these same goyim in the smoking car and exchange jokes with them, jokes not always easy to understand, since an alien humor is not readily grasped by one who still thinks in a foreign idiom. He no longer felt qualms at eating at a table covered with a red cloth in some farm kitchen even though he knew the potatoes were fried in forbidden lard. Once when one of his old customers of the countryside asked him to attend his first-born's christening, Abram actually entered the prim little white church and doffed his derby respectfully as the minister prayed over the howling child. The Jew with centuries of suspicion and fear behind him felt himself reddening with shame: he wondered why the very stones in the graveyard just outside the window didn't cry out "Meshumid" to him; why the ceiling did not crash upon his godless head. But the next Christmas, when another patron invited Abram to a church celebration, he felt a little more at home. He was friendly to the goyim and had learned not to shudder at their peculiar rites. Perhaps had there been a little more pressure brought to bear on Abram in those days, perhaps if he had had a little less sense of humor, or had loved a Christian woman, he might have definitely deserted the faith of his fathers. As it was, he remained a cemetery Jew.

For Abram, with all his kindly feelings for the goyim, did not wish to lie with them in death, and the feeling grew with him with the passing years. Now he often forgot when the Holy Days came around, but he never neglected to pay his congregational dues. For he wanted to be sure that although he had no

kith or kin to see him properly buried, his co-religionists would give him a proper sort of funeral, his own shroud and a plank coffin and all the rest. Perhaps—subconsciously he wished most of all for the funeral ritual he had heard over the bodies of his own dear ones; but as a hustling business man he had little time for prayers.

Nestling right in the heart of the rich Illinois farming country was the little village which we'll disguise sufficiently by calling it Middlesex. Middlesex is no longer a village; its Main Street flaunts the posters of the two picture houses; a very modern hotel with excellent sample rooms for traveling men has taken the place of the modest tavern where Abram used to lodge; two ice cream parlors have succeeded the town's three saloons. While the old hitching-posts before the post office have disappeared with other moldy relics of the past, and on Saturday afternoons Main Street is crammed with fussy little Fords of progressive farmers who have come to town for the week's groceries.

In the old days Abram hated Middlesex with a most virulent hate, declaring, when safely out of the neighborhood, that he'd hate to be found dead in such a town. For it happened that Abram had once dealt not well but too wisely with a certain local storekeeper. He was very frank in his denunciations whenever Abram's travels brought him into the neighborhood. Then, it being in the days when certain temperance lodges flourished in the Western villages, the local minister took occasion to denounce Abram for bringing certain suspicious looking bottles into the community.

Abram swore that he had brought the black bottles

to Middlesex urged through motives of pure friendship. Certain friends had asked him for the bottles of the best Scotch for rheumatism, snake bite and other ills of the flesh, so he had complied willingly, but, so help him God, he had lost money rather than made any profits on the transaction. But the local minister and his temperance cronies were not charitable enough to give Abram the benefit of the doubt; they denounced him from one end of Middlesex to the other; they even bullied the good-natured tavern keeper into telling Abram he had no vacant bed the next time the peddler came to town. As the tavern keeper had been one of the gentlemen to order the whisky from Chicago, Abram felt the cut rather deeply.

He shunned Middlesex after that, even after he had turned the corner of his fiftieth year and had laid aside his peddler's pack for a couple of neat suitcases and was able to travel from town to town by rail, even for short distances, instead of tramping the dusty roads. Things had gone well with Abram. He no longer ate his rye bread and cheese from a corner of his coat pocket, with furtive glances at his fellow passengers. Now he could afford to eat at the station restaurants and even on several gala occasions in the diner, where he felt exceedingly uncomfortable amid all the luxury of white linen, sparkling glass and cutlery. Leaning back in the smoking car, a ten-cent cigar between his teeth, he more than once sniffed contemptuously as the train stopped at Middlesex.

"See that jay town?" was his invariable comment to anyone who happened to share his seat. "A regular jay town—no push—no get-up about it. So help me God, I'd hate to be found dead there!"

Fate, who happens to be a malicious old lady with a soured sense of humor, decided that the incline a half mile north of Middlesex was a good place to upset an engine, the baggage car, the parlor car and all the day coaches. Upset them just as easily as a superstitious old dame turns over her teacup when she wants to peer among the grounds to read your fortune. Abram happened to be on one of the day coaches. In the quick blinding agony that swept over him just before the flaming timbers crashed down upon him and blotted out his sufferings, he thought, queerly enough, that it was a good thing he had only a couple of dollars in his wallet. Nobody would think it worth stealing, and then some kind soul would be sure to find his identification card and notify the Burial Society back in Chicago. Abram was mighty glad at that moment he had been so regular in paying his congregational dues. They would have to bury him in grand style and the rabbi would have to preach a grand sermon over him, even if he had eaten trefa all these years and hadn't gone to schul last Yom Kippur.

But Fate, even shrewder than Abram, managed to cheat him out of his burial. By the time the people of Middlesex helped to take the mangled bodies out of the wreck, what was left of Abram Epstein showed not a trace of the wallet and the identification card. The corpse lay for several days in the morgue, but no one came to identify and claim it. For why should the members of the Burial Society back home in Chicago, reading of the catastrophe in the morning papers, jump to the conclusion that Abram Epstein, whom they hadn't seen for years, was in the wreck?

There were two other bodies besides Abram's in the

morgue and the kindly townspeople decided to give them all a Christian burial. A collection was taken up for a funeral and the local undertaker was induced to supply three coffins at a wholesale rate. The Dorcas Society of the Methodist Church furnished flowers, and Father Kelly sent over to ask whether there was to be a Catholic service in case one or more of the dead happened to have belonged to his church. For Father Kelly had served as chaplain in the Civil War, and had buried all sorts of unidentified unbelievers without a single qualm of conscience.

But the Rev. Arthur Dinsdale of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the very gentleman who had formerly denounced Abram and his whisky bottles, answered politely but firmly that he preferred his own burial service. Which he read with much unction over the three graves dug in the least attractive corner of the graveyard. Naturally you couldn't give the choicest locations to unknown paupers.

So Abram Epstein, after all his wanderings, went to his bed at last, with a farewell prayer from an alien clergyman to wish him God-speed, as strangers buried him in the town he had scorned to be found dead in.

THE RETURN OF AKIBA

An Idyl For Lag B'omer

THE sunset blossomed like a rose beyond the village gate; the women passed to and fro, their pitchers poised upon their dark heads, pausing for a moment's gossip as they drew water from the well. From the gently swaying trees came the low chirpings of drowsy birds.

Down the dusty road came a little group of men, travel-stained and weary; each bore a traveler's staff in his hand, each had girded his loins as though for a long journey.

All save one viewed the little village with indifference, for they had passed many on the road that stretched from Dan to Beersheba, and would pass many more. But the eyes of their leader glistened with a strange light—a long-exiled man, he again gazed upon his home.

"Let us rest here a moment," he said, and the others paused near the well, grateful for the cool water. He who led his disciples to study in the schools of Babylon was a tall, straight man, vigorous and hardy, his broad shoulders contrasted strangely with his dreamy eyes and scholar's forehead.

He spoke again, his eyes furtively seeking a mean little hut a bit beyond them, almost hidden behind the stunted olive trees. "Go into the village," he commanded, "and ask for food and drink that we may be refreshed upon our journey. Say that you are the

disciples of a master who journeys to the great Academy, but tell no man my name." He sank upon a rock by the wayside and drew his cloak about his face.

The younger men passed into the village, breaking up into little groups of twos and threes as they passed down the quiet twilight streets. One only remained behind, a youth with a dark face singularly twisted and distorted, his eyes smoldering with fires, almost spent yet ready to leap up in a moment in devastating fury. He hesitated a moment, then respectfully touched his teacher's shoulder.

"Akiba, my master," he said softly, "what troubles you?"

Akiba rose and looked toward the mean little hut with yearning eyes. "Go with the others, Seth, my son," he told the youth, "for I would be alone with my thoughts."

Seth's sensitive face twisted as though in sudden pain. "I would not go with them," he answered almost sullenly. "They will go from house to house and speak with the women who give them food and drink. And I would have no word with women!"

"Nay, Seth, my son," chided the rabbi, and there was a hint of mockery in his gentle voice, "forget your foolish fear of womankind. It is not seemly in a son of Israel."

"You know my story," the boy spoke passionately, "how I forgot the laws of our people and made merry with the heathen . . . how I sinned again and again, and even now after months of study and solitude am still too unclean and polluted with vice to mingle with my fellow students or sit at your feet and listen to your teachings. Yet you would have me mingle freely

with women—talk with them—look into their faces—and again be tempted to my undoing!" His voice rose shrill and uneven. For a moment he seemed to forget that he addressed one of the greatest teachers in Israel. "And you, O my master, do not well when you fail to warn us, your disciples, against these creatures of lust who lead men into sin."

He stopped confused before the quiet rebuke in Akiba's eyes. Never before, even in his greatest passion, had he dared to rebuke his master. Now he stood flushed and abashed, awaiting his wrath. But when the rabbi spoke his voice was very gentle.

"Nay, my son," said Akiba, "you do not well to lay the weight of man's passions and appetites to the charge of women. True, some guide our feet into evil ways; but the love between a true man and a true woman is a holy thing, since God Himself has blessed it. Once," and his voice grew dreamy, while his eyes looked far away, "once, my son, I knew such a love and it has sanctified my whole life."

"I did not know—" stammered the youth.

"Nay, and how could you understand? I would not have you speak of this to the others, Seth, but when I was a youth, even as you are, I was not only ignorant of the teachings of our fathers, but scorned our teachers and our holy men. But a woman taught me to love God through my love for her."

They were seated now in the growing darkness. Here and there a lamp glowed in a window or a woman's voice stole softly to them singing a lullaby.

"I was but a poor shepherd, unknown and ignorant; she was the only child of a rich landowner, an heiress, famed alike for her beauty and her wealth, sought

by many suitors. Yet through a miracle of God, a love for me, unworthy as I was, stole into her heart, and one day she told me of her love.

"For my sake she was willing to leave her father's home, to give up the comfort and luxury she must surely forfeit, should she wed a beggar. She made but one condition, that after we were wed I should seek to acquire learning with some great teacher in Israel.

"Her father cast us out; she who had known a life of pleasantness became a beggar, even as I was, and together we went forth to share poverty and hardship —rejoicing because we loved each other. It was she, Rachel, who sent me far from her side ten years ago, willing to toil for her daily bread that I might study in the Academy and drink deeply of the Torah. I was too poor to make the journey and she cut off her long beautiful hair, that with the gold pieces she received for it I might buy food and drink and raiment while I studied. All this did one woman do for me . . . that I might become a scholar in Israel. Shall I not praise her all my days?"

The disciple nodded, his passionate face strangely softened. A few women, one of them carrying a sleeping child upon her shoulder, strolled toward the well and stood gossiping as they filled their pitchers. Akiba arose and turned longingly toward the little hut half hidden by the stunted olive trees.

"If I could see her again!" he murmured.

"She is here?" asked Seth.

"Yea, it was in that very house that I bade her farewell ten years ago. Tonight as we journey, I would see her if only for a moment. . . . I only wish to carry

away the memory of her face to cheer me in my exile. I know I must go on, for if I stay here and take upon myself the joys and cares of family life—" His eyes wandered wistfully toward the sleeping child the woman carried. "It is best I consecrate myself to the Torah, but it is very hard," he said simply.

Suddenly he caught Seth's arm, his face whitening. A woman had come from the little hut, and now walked toward the well, her pitcher poised upon her shoulder. Her garments while exquisitely neat showed mean and worn in the pale moonlight; there were coarse sandals upon her feet.

"Rachel—my wife!" murmured Akiba and the words were like a prayer. He drew Seth farther into the shadows.

The evening wind carried to them, hidden in the shadows, the voices of the women gossiping about the well, and their laughter, suddenly turned to mockery as Rachel approached.

"Peace be with you." She spoke quietly and lowered the bucket in the well.

"Can there be peace for a deserted wife?" laughed a maiden as she lifted her pitcher, ready to depart.

"Deserted for ten years!" jeered another.

"And you still insist that he lingers in the Academy to study the Law?" the first speaker laughed maliciously. "Yet he never returns to your side, even for a day. Have you asked the scholars who have come to us this day whether your husband will follow them?"

"Not after ten years!" one jeered, and Rachel shrank beneath their cruel laughter. "Who seeks the wife of his youth after ten years' absence?"

Rachel drew herself up proudly; for all her ragged

robe, she looked like a queen as she stood defying them all, the moonlight falling softly upon her calm face.

"If Akiba were to come to me this night," she answered her tormentors clearly, "I would bid him return to his studies for another ten years." She turned quietly away and walked to the lean little hut where she dwelt in her poverty and loneliness.

"You heard her?" Akiba demanded, turning to Seth, his face glowing with pride. "Ah, I must not weaken now—for her sake. Yet if I could but give her a word of comfort to stay her during the long years I must still remain from her side!"

Now the last of the women had left the well; from Rachel's hut gleamed a tiny taper. Signing Seth to remain behind, Akiba walked toward the little house, his face white and drawn in the moonlight. He drew his mantle closely about his head and knocked upon the low door.

Rachel stood on the threshold, looking out upon him with puzzled eyes. Her eyes held shadows, her mouth drooped wearily; yet her beauty smote him and tore at his heart as her fairness had never done in the olden days when Rachel had given herself to him in the freshness and loveliness of her youth.

"I am a student," he told her, striving to speak in a disguised voice, "and I come from the Academy where Akiba sits among the teachers."

Her hand clutched at her throat; she spoke with difficulty.

"Yes? What message did he send to me?"

"He said that I should seek out his wife Rachel and ask her whether she wanted for naught in his absence?"

Rachel's sad eyes wandered back into her bare little

house, then fell upon her work-worn hands. "I have bread to eat and water to drink," she answered. "I work at the loom from dawn until darkness; that leaves me very tired, but it is better to sleep."

"It is the desire of Akiba's heart to travel to the great Academy, to study the Law among the teachers in that far place. But then he could not return to you for many years. Are you willing to have him go?"

"Were he here I should bid him go and stay until his thirst for learning is satisfied," she answered bravely.

"But if there were time for him to return to you for a few hours—or, perhaps, a day——"

Suddenly her longing flashed forth, enveloping them both in a scorching flame. "No—no—he must not come back to bid me farewell," she cried fiercely. "It would be too hard to say good-by to him for a second time. Tell him this—tell him not to come."

"And this is your only message?" asked Akiba.

"Yes," she answered, drying her eyes and facing him calmly once more. "Tell him I am well—and very happy."

. . . . .

As the disciples passed along the road to Babylon, Akiba strode at their head, his face white, bearing the look of a conqueror who has tasted the bitterness of death in his triumph. While Rachel, weeping on her lonely bed, sobbed far into the night.

"Akiba, Akiba," she murmured again and again. "You thought I did not know your voice—the look of your dear hands. Why did I not keep you even for an hour? But I did not dare to have you bid me farewell a second time."

INTERMARRIAGE

A New Twist to an Old Problem

"SOMETIMES the most horrible examples of intermarriage occur between two Jews," Reba declared to herself with all the furious certainty of her twenty-two years. She sat curled upon one of the low bookcases beneath her fifth-story window, basking in her hour of sunshine—there isn't much of it in a New York flat!—as she vigorously rubbed her hair with a Turkish towel. The girl smiled to hear a wheezy hand-organ in the street below grind out the eternally new rebellion of the "Marseillaise." At that moment it was less the unchained fury of downtrodden French peasants than the fierce joy of all imprisoned souls tasting their first freedom. And because she, too, was enjoying her freedom and finding it good, Reba smiled on the little brown organ-grinder like a brother as she tossed a coin to the pavement below. . . .

It hadn't seemed at all like an intermarriage at first, for Frank Schwartz's people, according to their own standards, were good and sincere Jews. Not orthodox like Reba's people, which gave her a feeling of satisfaction, since she had long ago broken away from the old-world orthodoxy of her parents. In fact, when she first met Frank, then a senior at Columbia, she was rooming with a girl friend near the college campus, supporting herself through her junior year by tutoring and odd jobs in the library. She was friendly enough

with the rather simple people who had given her birth and always carried her mother some little gift when she paid one of her flying visits to the East Side; for their sakes she even sat through the well-nigh endless holy day services every autumn. But she never considered herself a Jew—at least in any but a racial sense—until she left New York.

Frank met her at some protest meeting or other and straightway fell in love with her. He often went to radical gatherings in those days, taking his full sup of liberalism before he prepared to settle down to the wise conservatism expected in the son of the leading clothier in a sedate Western town. His father had frowned upon the thought of any career but business for his only son; college he looked upon as a harmless frill, not any more important than the term at a fashionable finishing school he gave his two daughters. Irma and Louise came back to Waterbury quite finished for the career of a fashionable marriage; they dressed well and knew a little society patter and danced divinely. Of course, they brought back no radical or ultra-modern ideas in their trunks, along with their ultra-fashionable wardrobes. Frank, who had rubbed against all manner of men and ideas while in college, did feel vaguely dissatisfied for a month or two after his return to Waterbury. But he soon became a sober, efficient member of the Temple Sociables and the Rotary Club, and never failed at dinner parties to lament the hardships of the exploited capitalistic class. His mother, perhaps, was right in saying that he was much safer (whatever that meant!) than if he had actually married that dreadful girl.

He would have married the dreadful girl had not the

little gods who preside over the Chuppah, or their modern equivalent, arranged that Reba should spend her mid-year holidays in the home of her fiancé's people. She was in her senior year now, while Frank, who had graduated the previous June, had gone back to Waterbury. Rather reluctantly, as he had longed to take a post-graduate course, but his father decided that four years of college were quite adequate. He insisted upon at least a year of business before Frank's marriage. And Frank, who was a pleasant chap and didn't like to disagree with his parents, was satisfied. He told Reba confidently he could keep up his reading in the evening; after they were married they'd try to organize a few choice spirits into a Civic Club—no bridge but plenty of gray matter and unlimited discussion. Rosy dreams, and Reba was just as enthusiastic as her lover; he had forgotten the narrowness of the social circle of his boyhood; she had never even imagined a place like Waterbury.

So she went there for a visit during her mid-year holidays. Sitting in her New York bedroom as she dried her hair, she recalled every incident of her stay in Waterbury, terminating in the talk she had had with her lover after the dance on New Year's eve. The rest of Frank's family had gone to bed and the two young people lingered for a word or two before the comforting gas log in the living room fireplace. It was a fine large room, with deep windows; furniture conventional but in good taste; several Oriental rugs on the floor, and on the walls pictures that were rather well chosen by sister Irma, who had taken an art course at finishing school. Even at that poignant moment Reba noted that the only books in the room

were several popular novels Louise had thrown on the davenport. She thought, with a throb of homesickness, of the shabby Hebrew books crowded along the walls of her mother's stuffy kitchen; her father was a poor man but he loved books better than bread; she thought also of her own little bedroom where her beloved volumes—often bought at a real sacrifice—overflowed the cases and lay upon table and window-seat and dresser. But there were no books to speak of in this house—only the ones Frank had brought from college and stowed away in his own room upstairs.

"Did you have a good time?" began the man.

"No." Her voice was sullen and she did not raise her eyes. "You know I didn't."

"I'm sorry. I know you never did care much for dances—" he trailed off lamely, for in the old free life they had once known together they would have both laughed at the absurdity of wasting a precious evening as they had wasted this.

"I like good times, too," she said after a moment, and now his lover's ear detected a slow anger burning beneath her quiet words. "But since I've been in this house I've spent—do you know how we've spent every evening?"

"Having a good time!" He laughed uneasily. "You know how popular my folks are, so people have entertained a good deal for you."

"And how?" She sank upon the couch before the fire, clenching her small fists in the lap of her gray silk dress. Frank gazed down at her appreciatively. It was a simple frock and inexpensive, but it brought out the rich warmth of her glowing beauty far better than a more sophisticated toilette could have achieved.

He liked, too, the simplicity of her hair, gathered in a great loose knot, the modest cut of her bodice. He had seen his sisters raise their eyebrows when she had first appeared in this party dress, the only one she had brought for the many affairs of Waterbury's holiday season; but he was not troubled. Irma and Louise even in their "imported rags" (as he irreverently dubbed them) were not above feeling envy of their prospective sister-in-law's beauty—and of showing it.

"How have your friends in Waterbury tried to give me a good time?" she repeated. "I'll tell you." She enumerated slowly, counting on her ringless fingers, beautiful tapering fingers which were her heritage from some not ignoble Ghetto ancestor: "Monday—cards; Tuesday—luncheon at the hotel with a group of flappers who tried to make conversation by talking about New York musical shows they were justing 'dying' to see; in the evening a dance, ending with a supper where enough food was wasted to keep a dozen children in your slums well fed for a month; Wednesday—another luncheon at your Mrs. Grossmith's——"

"She's the leading Jewish woman in this town." His voice had grown slightly resentful. "It was mighty nice of her to entertain for you."

"And she's the leading Jewish woman in this town? My God!" the girl was frankly horrified. "She can't talk well, she's not educated, she hasn't an idea in her head and her social outlook wouldn't be too advanced for the Stone Age. Why, she spent half the meal lamenting how hard it was to get good help when the foolish girls preferred to work in the factories. Then she took the opportunity to rant about the unions—she knows nothing about them, but was quoting her

fat-headed husband, I suppose!—and finished with the horrible example of the factory girl who spends half of her enormous salary on silk stockings. I was so wild by that time, I asked her whether it was any more shocking to spend your hard-earned money on such trash than to get them by being nice to some man who can afford to buy them for you. Which is what these lazy, idle married women do! Then she kept still and let the others gab."

"You shouldn't have talked like that: she's never thought and read and studied the way we have, but——"

"Then what right does she have to be the 'leading Jewish woman in town'? Because she knows how to plan an overelaborate luncheon, or can afford to have an extra maid to help her poor overworked guests take off their wraps? I hate her and all she stands for!"

"You can't reform people like her in a day," he warned her.

"You can't reform them in a century merely by guzzling and dancing and playing cards with them. Not that I want to reform them—God forbid! Your rabbi is paid for that and the way the ladies raved over him at Mrs. Grossmith's, I guess he's not reforming them hard enough to lose his job. Mrs. Appelbaum said it was such a joy to have a liberal-minded man in the pulpit; it seems that more goyism than Jews came to hear the Christmas sermon. And he had thanked her so beautifully when she sent his little boy a Christmas present. Mighty different from the back number they had last year who wouldn't play cards on Friday night after Temple and said Jews shouldn't exchange Christmas gifts!"

"I don't understand you." He left his place on the hearth rug and sat beside her. "Now you're raving about our rabbi and the fact that we don't keep the Sabbath the way your father does. But you've always told me you didn't feel Jewish."

"Wait a minute. I'm not through with my diary yet! Wednesday afternoon we thought we'd have five minutes together, didn't we? But the Ransons took us out in their machine that I 'might see Waterbury.' I didn't want to see your fool library and Farmers' Bank and the park; I wanted to see your Settlement House and your Baby Clinic and your slums. Remember what Mrs. Ranson said: 'We never go over on the West Side if we can help it. You can catch anything from those kikes.' And we talk about the dear goyim having prejudices!

"Another dance on Wednesday night and on Thursday——"

He interrupted her impatiently. "You're really unjust, Reba. You know my sisters are doing society and they're young and have to enjoy themselves. If you lived here——"

"I'd be expected to be like them. None of the young girls or married women I've met here do an hour's productive work a day if they can afford to have it done for them. Oh, yes, I know your mother spends half a morning in her kitchen sometimes slaving over a fussy dessert, but that's not work. She'd have nervous prostration if she had to scrub her kitchen floor the way my mother does and clean the fish every Friday. And I don't call sewing a few dresses for the Orphan Asylum the way they did at the 'Ladies' Aid' Thursday real work. Several of the older women did

work steadily; most of them were too busy talking about that nasty Marcuson divorce case to finish their jobs. And about a fourth of them came from some card party or other and left before the speaker was half through. They had the English professor from the high school and his lecture was so simple they wouldn't have been bored if they'd stopped giggling and whispering long enough to listen to him."

"Do you think it's exactly good manners to talk like that about people who have tried to be nice to us?" he demanded.

She laughed harshly. "Good manners! I've never seen such rotten manners in my life. These elegant ladies would be shocked at my mother's table manners, but where I was brought up it was considered good breeding to observe the Sabbath. And tonight your Temple Sociables had their New Year's eve dance—on a Friday night."

"You've always said you weren't religious!"

"I'm not. What shocks me is the ghastly hypocrisy of these people who pretend to be good Jews and belong to a Temple they desert on Friday night because they prefer jazz. It's that way at every turn. You pretend to be good Jews and you snub a scholar and a gentleman like old Mr. Levine because he speaks with an accent. You pretend to be charitable and I heard your own father say that he was going to drop his subscription to the Consumptive Home because business was getting tight and he couldn't afford to support everything. But he could afford a new car last month—he could afford——"

He caught her hands, tried to kiss her. "Reba, try to look at things a little sensibly. You've got to fit

into this environment after we're married; try to be a little charitable now. I know how it strikes you at first," he confessed. "I know how it sickened me. But father's right; you can't change everything in a hurry. You've got to overlook a lot of things and get used to it—as I did."

She flung him off. "Yes, you're used to it! You've deserted the ideals, the hopes you found in college; you belong to these people. But, thank God, I don't. And I never shall." Her voice suddenly grew very quiet. "Tomorrow I am going back to my people."

He willfully misunderstood her. "You mean your father and mother and the life you wanted to escape from?"

She shook her head. "No—for they aren't my people any longer—not any more than yours are." Suddenly she flung out her slim young arms in a gesture so sincere it did not seem theatric. "I belong to the workers and the dreamers. I'm going back to finish my term at college and then I'm going to work hard—and dream hard. Maybe," whimsically, "I may discover a Judaism I can accept; not the Judaism of the past generation, not the hollow sham you people here call your religion. Even now I'm too Jewish for the Judaism you practice. I couldn't marry a goy like you; I couldn't live with a group of people like your family and their friends: it would be much harder than marrying a Christian. We don't understand each other any longer; and that's the most terrible kind of intermarriage."

Turning swiftly, she ran up the stairs to the dainty pink and white guest room. She threw herself across

the lacy bed and hid her face in her arms; but she did not cry. . . .

Back in her little New York bedroom, tossing her tangled hair as she listened to the music of the "Marseillaise," Reba smiled to hear the eternal battle cry of all imprisoned souls tasting their first freedom.

A MOTHER OF BETHLEHEM

A Story for Shabuoth

THE warm sunlight flowed into the window of the little house of Naomi of Bethlehem, the house where she had borne the two sons who had died in Moab across the Jordan. A widow without children, she had returned to the home of her childhood with Ruth, her daughter-in-law, at her side. Ruth, the widow of Mahlon, a woman of Moab, had deserted her home and kin for the sake of Naomi, her mother-in-law, refusing to desert her in her old age. . . . And now Naomi, in trembling doubt and impatience, waited for her to return from the threshing-floor of Boaz.

Sitting by the window, the morning sunshine falling upon her gray hair and sorrowful face, Naomi remembered all that had come to pass since her return to Bethlehem. Naomi, who had gone forth a wealthy woman, rejoicing in her husband and her two strong young sons, had returned a sorrowing widow with no stay in life but the frail girl who drooped at her side. She who had known abundance might have suffered want had not Ruth gone forth into the harvest fields of Boaz, the rich kinsman of Naomi, there to gather the gleanings of the reapers, consecrated by the Law of Moses to the fatherless and the poor.

Naomi recalled her fears for Ruth the morning the girl had set out for the harvest fields of Boaz; even in the coarse garments she had worn since her widow-

hood, Ruth's young beauty shone forth so radiantly that Naomi had bade her a little harshly to veil her face should she meet with rudeness from the young men who worked among the reapers. Later she repented of her sharp voice, for Ruth, who was docile in all things, had never been guilty of boldness or immodesty. Yet a pain stirred in Naomi's jealous mother heart as she realized that her dead son Mahlon was deprived of his wife's sweetness and beauty even in the days of his youth.

The summer days passed until the barley harvest was over, and every night Ruth, weary from her toil among the gleaners, returned with her arms filled with gleanings. As they sat in the dusk together she told many tales of the kindness of the reapers, who gave her the best of the gleanings; and she spoke often of Boaz, the master of them all, who had asked her to sit and break bread with him during the noonday meal, and gave her to drink from his own cup. And Naomi had listened with heart strangely torn between joy and anger, joy that the thing she had hardly dared to dream might come to pass, anger that Ruth, who had known her son's love, had so soon learned to forget his devotion and the few months of happiness they had known together. . . . But she kept her thoughts unspoken and encouraged Ruth to speak of Boaz, her kinsman, and a rich landowner in Bethlehem.

Now the end of the barley and of the wheat harvest had come and Naomi feared that the daily communion between Boaz, master of the reapers, and Ruth might come to an end and that her dreams would thus end in emptiness. And so, the night before, when she knew that Boaz, according to the custom of that day, slept

upon the threshing floor, Naomi had called Ruth before her and had placed upon her certain strange commands. With her own hands Naomi decked the girl in her own bridal garments, delicate robes of white and silver, the sole remainder of her former wealth; she braided the girl's red hair with pearls, and placed bracelets and anklets upon her, wrapping her in a dark mantle and veil that those who passed upon the road might not spy upon her beauty. And then she had commanded the young woman to go to Boaz as he kept watch upon the threshing-floor, reminding him that none of his house had remembered the law that when a man dies without children, his next of kin must marry the widow lest his line die forever in Israel.

Ruth had flushed and paled, but had said no word, for she spoke little when deeply moved. At last she had said slowly: "And you would have me wed again?"

"If he weds you," answered Naomi, evading the question, and hating herself for the evasion, "if Boaz weds you, the line of my son, Mahlon, need not die out in Israel, and I may still hold a grandchild upon my knee."

And Ruth had answered nothing. Drawing her veil closely about her face, she had left Naomi in the doorway, walking down the road white with moonlight as proudly as a young queen who goes to her coronation. And the older woman had watched her with increasing bitterness in her heart, for the girl seemed glad to seek out a new lover, while she, Naomi, knew she would never cease to mourn the husband of her youth.

Naomi thought of all these things, brooding over Ruth's hardness of heart as she sat waiting for her to return. "A heathen woman at heart!" she muttered.

"A true daughter of Moab! Well do I remember the tears she shed over Mahlon's funeral bed. And now because Boaz is young and good to look upon and very rich, she gives herself to him gladly and looks eagerly for the day of her espousals. No daughter of Israel could prove herself so faithless to a husband she pretended to love." Thus mused Naomi, her mother love for her dead son helping her to forget how Ruth had left native land and kinsfolk for her sake, caring for her as tenderly as though she had been of her own blood.

She looked up to see Ruth standing before her. "Well?" she asked, and anxiety made her voice harsh and shrill. "What of Boaz?"

Ruth opened her mantle before she spoke. "These six measures of barley did Boaz give me," she answered, displaying the gift she brought with her, "and he has promised that he will act the kinsman's part to me." She sighed a little, her sad eyes looking through the open window toward the hills of Moab, her home which lay beyond the Jordan.

"He said," continued Ruth, "that there was one nearer of kin to my husband's house than he. But if Boaz could buy the land of your husband for himself, then Boaz will have the right to wed me. Today he goes to meet the elders at the gate that they may talk of this thing among themselves."

Naomi rose heavily from her seat, the old anger for Ruth's heartlessness stirring within her, mingled with joy that Boaz would redeem her son's inheritance and perhaps raise children in his stead.

"I know Boaz," she said at last, "and that he will

not rest until he has finished this thing. . . . You will be happy with Boaz for he is a good and honorable man."

"I was happy with Mahlon," answered Ruth softly, her eyes looking again toward Moab, where Mahlon had led her from her father's house to his own.

"Think no longer of Mahlon," commanded Naomi, again speaking harshly, "for you are young and cannot live with the dead. No doubt Orpah, the wife of Chilion, his brother, is already wed and has forgotten even his name. You need not mourn for him for you go to a new home and a new joy. Let me mourn in your stead; it will not be hard for me for I am his mother."

"Yes, you are his mother," answered Ruth, a strange wistfulness in her gentle face, and again she looked toward Moab.

Then a strong constraint grew up between the two women and they spoke only of indifferent things, nor was their silence broken until the day when Naomi stood beside the couch of Ruth and took the new-born child from her arms. And Naomi wept in her joy for she knew now that the name of her son Mahlon would never perish in Israel.

From the next room she could hear the women of Bethlehem, friends of her youth, rejoicing in her new-found joy. She heard their voices rising and falling in their festal song:

"There is a son born to Naomi;
A son born to her in her old age!
She who was without children will nurse him;
And she shall be as his mother unto him."

Naomi stole a glance toward the bed and saw tears coursing down the young mother's white cheeks. A sudden tenderness stole over her as she placed the child on Ruth's breast.

"You do not mind what they sing?" she asked. "They are old friends, old women like myself whose days are nearly over. So they rejoice with me that I am not left a withered tree, doomed to perish. They are glad that I and my sons are renewed in this child —who will be a son to both of us."

"Nay, I do not envy you though it is your name they sing, not mine," answered Ruth as she gazed upon the little one. A foolish young mother with her first son, she dreamed like all other fond mothers that some day her child might rise to a fair place before all Israel. But with her the dreams were not so wonderful as that which came to pass. How could the simple girl from Moab foresee that this child's grandson would be the fair-haired shepherd boy, David, who would bring glory to all Israel as he sat upon his golden throne in high Jerusalem? Who was there to whisper that in the days to come when all Israel would be scattered and broken, that many mothers, weak, yet radiant upon their child-beds, would dream that their sons, descendants of the seed of David, might be the long-prayed-for Messiah of their people?

"At last I can praise God for His goodness, for He hath not deserted me in my old age," chanted Naomi. "For it was not for my husband that I mourned alone, nor for my sons, but I grieved that our name should perish in Israel."

"Mother," said Ruth, and a look of pain swept her white face, "mother, speak not of this to anyone, but I

would this had been Mahlon's son. When Boaz took me for his wife, his kindness and his love softened my grief for Mahlon, my dead husband, and I thought my joy in the child would ease my heart. But now I grieve afresh that it is not Mahlon who rejoices in our first-born and calls him son."

"Forgive me, forgive me," cried Naomi, "for I thought that you had long ago forgotten Mahlon. And you seemed so willing to marry Boaz!"

Ruth smiled her pardon into the withered face that bent above her. "I knew Mahlon would forgive me if I wedded again," she answered, "for I did not wish to die until I had borne a son."

PART II

THE STORY AND THE LITERARY PROGRAM

PART II

Section 1: Selection and Preparation of the Story

IN preparing this book of material and programs, I have followed the type of programs most frequently presented by literary clubs through the country, a program of music and discussions, combined with the reading of short stories and plays. We need not discuss here what courses of study should be followed in connection with the purely entertaining features of the program; we already have such excellent guides as the material on *Jewish Music* by Irma Reinhardt Cohon and the collection of essays on *Jewish Prayer* compiled by Mrs. Felix Levy, both prepared under the auspices of the National Council of Jewish Women for Council study circles.

But here we are interested with programs chiefly as entertainment, and in the entertainment program we can find no substitute for the short story. Do not misunderstand me: the short story need not appear in every program during the year; it need not appear more than two or three times during the season, although if carefully selected, you may read a story at each program month after month and still have your audience crying for more. By short story, I mean a narrative that may be read in twenty minutes or less; for this reason I am not touching upon two excellent features of literary programs, the novel and the play.

These are admirable in the hands of a professional reader who has mastered the difficult art of holding her audience and who has learned to cut down bulky material to the required length. But this volume is not intended for the professional reader. I am just an everyday Council member myself, writing for the woman who has had no special training in public speaking, but is willing to do her share for her organization's program and is anxious to learn how to do it.

The story, whenever possible, should be combined with musical selections, papers or reports upon current topics or books and plays. We are primarily interested in the story just now and must try to see that all other material in the program is selected in relation to it. A little later on we will try to find out just what constitutes a well-balanced program and how to assemble it.

The short story if properly selected should amuse as well as inspire and instruct the listener; but what short stories are really suitable for our programs and where will we find them? This is difficult; we must find the story which not only appeals to the average clubwoman, say, Edna Ferber's "Gay Old Dog," but a tale which is Jewish in background and theme such as Israel Zangwill's "They Who Walk in Darkness." I do not mean that our organizations should not form circles for the study of general literature; but often only a few members attend such study circles and the larger group attend only the program meetings, where such stories should be read as contribute something really Jewish, a bit of history or Biblical lore, such as "A Son of Pharaoh" in this volume, or an inspirational

message like that of our opening tale, "The Mother with Nothing to Give." For that reason the stories included in this collection, with the few exceptions which have been allowed for the sake of variety and humor, have been chosen not only for their appeal to women, but especially for their appeal to Council members and Jewish women in other organizations.

Unfortunately there are very few suitable short stories; we have plenty of stories of Jewish life—Jewish because the characters have Jewish names and enjoy Jewish cooking like the delightful people in Montague Glass's stories—but many of these will not fit into our program. Often they hold the Jew up to ridicule; sometimes their point of view offends us; at best they may present such a superficial study of Jewish life that they become misleading rather than inspirational. Often the story is too long, or it may present a life too foreign to be appreciated by modern American Jewesses, e. g., "The Talmudists," listed among the stories by Perez in the Bibliography which follows. Once in a while an excellent story of Jewish life appears in the current magazines, but who keeps a file of last year's numbers?—and few of these stories ever appear between the covers of a book. Sometimes this lack of suitable Jewish program material may be supplemented by holding competitions among our members, especially in the larger cities, offering prizes for the best original short stories on Jewish life. Unfortunately, when this is done, no effort is made to preserve the prize winning tales which would prove so invaluable to other sections; for example, one of Mrs. Mary Hevesh's poignant tales which won first place in a contest of the Chicago Sec-

tion, although it appeared later in the "American Hebrew" has not been sufficiently circulated to be enjoyed by the various sections throughout the country.

Now what stories will we choose of those really available? In the first place the story must be short, not only to hold the interest of Mrs. Katz, who is anxious to slip out and see whether the coffee is almost ready for the refreshment hour, but brief enough to give Miss Mollie Ruben a chance to give an encore to her violin solo. But sometimes the story like "In the Rabbi's Study" may be shortened by dropping one section. But if the story is too long it may be cut, but this requires great care. Do not make the mistake of counting sentences, cutting out a paragraph here or there. Decide just what part of the story will be the most interesting to read; then prepare a very brief synopsis telling what has happened in the omitted portions. To illustrate: take Zangwill's story, "The Red Mark," mentioned in the Bibliography. In a word sketch poor little Becky's home life, stressing how difficult it was for her to have perfect attendance at school. Be sure to quote the amusing messages the older children wrote whenever they needed Becky's help in their own homes; tell how Becky's room in school almost won the banner for perfect attendance; then let Zangwill tell as only he can the story of Becky's adventure on the last day and why she wasn't marked absent after all.

Even if your story is short enough, be sure that it is not tiresome because it presents too many ideas or has too difficult a background. For it is never as easy to receive your story "through the ear" as "through the eye." For that reason some of Zang-

will's sketches are ideal for program work, since they are done in broad, heavy strokes; on the other hand, some sketches have been deliberately omitted from the Bibliography because they are too delicate to be appreciated by any but a very small and intimate group of listeners. Then stories like Zangwill's "From a Mattress Grave" are not suitable for groups unless they are fairly well acquainted with the life and works of Heine. This story is admirable for the armchair where it may be enjoyed at leisure and put aside when the reader has for the moment learned enough of the dying poet; but it contains far too many facts and fancies to be absorbed by women who have only a superficial knowledge of his many adventures and his many-sided philosophy.

Now even if the story is sufficiently short and simple and interesting, it should, whenever possible, bring a certain amount of Jewish information or inspiration (or both!) to our members. If you look over the contents of this volume you will see that the stories are grouped roughly under four heads, stories that teach something about the history, holidays or ceremonials of our religion ("The Two-Edged Sword," "A Succoth Table" and "Unhallowed Candles"); Jewish problems ("Intermarriage" and "Twenty Years After," as a study in anti-Semitism); reflections of contemporary Jewish life ("Birds of a Feather" and "Patchwork"); humorous sketches, which although they are not intrinsically Jewish, aim to be true portraiture ("Eight O'clock Sharp" and "Vivian Gets a Booking").

Notice, too, how hard I have striven for variety, for variety is the spice of every program. The holiday stories are of Biblical times and of our own day. All

the modern stories except the symbolic Passover study, "Dawn through the Darkness," are laid in America, although several of them deal with immigrant Jews. And because the average woman is more interested in American life and problems than studies of Jewish life in Europe or the Ghetto sketches which are most frequently used to picture the Jew in America, the stories of American Jews attempt to show every section of American Jewish life (the immigrant in the ghetto in "Stairs"; the Jew in the small town, "A Cemetery Jew"; the middle-class Brooklyn Jew in "Vivian Gets a Booking"; the New York—and other large city—Jew in "Birds of a Feather").

In the same way I have tried to find stories of every type for the appended Bibliography. This list is not exhaustive; any well-read person can doubtlessly add a dozen to the ones already listed. It will be seen that Zangwill's stories occupy considerable space; this is as it should be since no other Jewish writer has written so often and so well for us English-speaking Jews; in his stories he touches every phase and every corner of Jewish life and what he touches he enriches with his singular charm, his deep insight into the Jewish soul. Unfortunately much of Perez and "Shalom Aleichem" is poorly translated or not translated at all; even at best their peculiar flavor is lost when carried over into English; often, when a large proportion of the section is familiar with Yiddish, it is a good thing to have a short sketch of one of these masters read in the original, preceded by a synopsis for the benefit of those with no knowledge of Yiddish.

Such a synopsis requires preparation on the part of the reader, which brings us to perhaps the most im-

portant requirement of our program. First find your story; but the most appropriate story in the world will fall as flat as the proverbial pancake if it is served from the hands of an inefficient and unprepared reader. Let me say it again, by an efficient reader I do not mean a professional elocutionist; although if you are fortunate enough to have one in your midst never cease to give thanks for her and show yourselves decently grateful whenever she places her talents and her time at your disposal. But any member, no matter how untrained, can read a story satisfactorily if she has a good clear voice—and is willing to work!

In preparing her story, it is best for the reader to consider what type of story suits her personality the best. For example, it would be rather stupid for a quiet, self-possessed social worker to read "More than Bread," which would lead every woman in the audience to comparing her to the butterfly amateur who plays at social service in the story. Or why should a bright little woman try to convey the tragedy of "Stairs" or "Dawn through the Darkness"? Although it is not absolutely necessary to have lived the life portrayed in your story or to sympathize with its lesson in order to read it effectively, for example, if a non-Jewish professional reader will help you with your program, there is no reason why you cannot suggest one of the listed stories to her, providing a Jewish program for yourselves and earning her thanks by increasing her repertoire. Above all beware of dialect! One of my most painful recollections—and others suffered with me—is of hearing a reader, expert in Irish and French types, trying to impersonate a Yiddish newsboy.

After you have picked out your story, remember

that everyone in your audience will like to know something about the life of the author. In some cases you will find your author's biography in the Jewish Encyclopedia or "Who's Who"; however, if the author is still living, it is often impossible to read up about him and it is usually more satisfactory to write to him—in plenty of time!—asking him for a few personal facts for your sketch. It is also highly desirable to preface your reading with a few words to give the audience the necessary background and atmosphere.

Now prepare your story. You may not be an experienced reader, but you can always be a prepared reader; you owe the courtesy of preparation to the helpless author of the story you read and to your equally helpless audience. This may seem like flippant and unnecessary advice; yet I have again and again known professional entertainers to labor long and carefully over simple programs, while inexperienced amateurs have actually mounted the platform without having even glanced over the material which they were asked to prepare weeks before. "You'll have to excuse me if I mispronounce some of the names; I didn't get to look over this yet," murmured a woman to her audience recently; yet she felt a little nettled when several women in the audience began to wriggle and whisper by the time she reached the second paragraph.

But it is not enough to glance over your story an hour before your program—and trust to luck. As soon as you decide upon your story, read it aloud, first to time yourself and know how much cutting, if any, is needed, then for cadences and to make sure that you will not stumble over foreign or unfamiliar words.

Read your selection over as many times as necessary until you are ready to read it to a few or even to one listener. This will cure you of any possible self-consciousness and if your listeners are good critics as well as good friends they may be able to give you more than one valuable reaction or bit of advice.

SECTION 2: HOW TO PLAN THE PROGRAM

Now that we have a perfect story perfectly prepared(!), let us fit it into our perfect program. I believe the ideal literary program should not last over an hour, which means that after a twenty-minute story plus a five-minute preface, you will have about thirty-five minutes left. Suppose you decide to have a Zangwill program and choose one of his short stories mentioned in the Bibliography, say, "The Keeper of Conscience," a story of mingled pathos and humor. Because of your author's prominence you may choose to have a more elaborate biography presented by some other member than the reader, instead of asking her to give the few introductory biographical facts before the story is read. You might also care to have some one give an intimate personal view of the author. If you are fortunate enough to have in your section any one who has met Mr. Zangwill on one of his visits to America, she should be persuaded to give as informal a paper as possible; if not, carefully culled paragraphs from one of the many interviews published in the Jewish and secular papers during his visit to our country. If you wish music it would be charming to use one or two of the songs which Mr. Zangwill has translated from the Hebrew; these may be found in the Union

Hymnal. Or, since the story read portrays English life some characteristically English folk songs might be substituted. If a recitation and instrumental music are preferred, you might substitute Zangwill's well-known poem, "The Hebrew's Friday Night."

Or, suppose you have already had a detailed biography of Zangwill and do not care for the music I have suggested. Then you might prefer to use his story of the immigrant, "The Promised Land," Schauffler's poem on immigration, "Scum o' the Earth" or the welcome to all newcomers written by our own Emma Lazarus for the base of the Statue of Liberty, "The New Colossus." Then there might follow a discussion of immigration, past and present restriction, what the Council has done and hopes to do for the immigrant, etc.

If you make these discussions fit into your program properly they will perhaps prove the most valuable feature of the year's work. The story will cease to be a mere story as soon as it is tied up with some living, vital problem of today. Above all, it gives every member of the audience a chance to take part in the program. Often a less serious discussion is almost as valuable. A certain group, after hearing a play of Jewish life, gave the members a real "quiz" to learn how many understood the meaning of the Yiddish words used in the text; another group, after listening to a ceremonial holiday story, enjoyed an informal discussion of holiday observances in the home for Purim; one recalled an old-fashioned Purim spiel in which she had acted as a child; a very old lady recalled a certain Erev Purim when she had heard the Megilla read in a European schul; several very different recipes for

homon taschen were offered. The members were all much more interested than if they had listened to an elaborate paper on "Purim Customs" and several who could never have been induced to mount the platform to deliver such a lecture were delighted to find that they, too, could contribute something to the Council program.

Having planned one perfect program, let us make up our minds to have one every month from October to May. The program above is only suggestive, since any member should be able to work out one more suitable for local conditions; your plan for your year's program must also fit your local needs. And just as you try to make your monthly program a beautifully balanced, varied product, you will try to make your year's program a perfect whole, with plenty of variety, of course, yet giving the members a fine complete impression to take away with them after the last meeting of the season is over.

As I said before, I have tried to give as much variety as possible in this volume, seeking to present every phase of Jewish life, picturing both the dark and the sunny side, including stories for the holidays which our organizations may celebrate through the year. Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur are omitted since these holy days are observed rather in the synagogue than in the meeting; Tisha B'ab falls in the summer season; some of the minor fast and feast days have been omitted although one story has been included for Lag B'omer; this will be found especially suitable if we wish to give a spring celebration and tactfully choose the May Day of the Jewish people.

Now if you want only three story programs during

the year I suggest you use three very different types of story, one holiday, one modern problem story, one humorous or satiric. If you wish a whole year of story programs, I suggest that you alternate the material in this book with the tales suggested in the Bibliography or others you believe more suitable for your own audience. My excessive modesty which I find painful at times forbids me to base the year's outline upon the material in this volume; yet if you were cast on a deserted island with only this book and the members of your section saved from the wreck, and you wanted to give a year's program it ought to run something like this:

Succoth or Sabbath:
"A Succoth Table" or "Unhallowed Candles"
Farce:
"Eight O'clock Sharp!" or "Vivian Gets a Booking"
Russian Background:
"Stairs," or if not used for Passover, "Dawn Through the Darkness"
Chanukah or Purim:
"The Two-Edged Sword" or "A Day in Shushan"
Satire:
"Birds of a Feather" or "A Cemetery Jew"
Problem:
"Intermarriage" or "In the Rabbi's Study" or "Twenty Years After"
Special Woman's Problem or Passover:
"The Mother with Nothing to Give" or "A Son of Pharaoh"
Lag B'omer or Shabuoth:

"The Return of Akiba" or "A Mother of Bethlehem"

(If Shabuoth occurs in May, this Shabuoth story would be appropriate for a Mother's Day program; or you might use "The Mother with Nothing to Give.")

SECTION 3: MODEL PROGRAMS

I have worked out for you what I consider an adequate and entertaining Zangwill program, and suggested how to alternate it. The three programs which follow (holiday, modern problem, humorous or satiric) I have already mentioned as the best types to choose if only three story programs are given, are outlined below, again, merely as suggestions for the member who will adapt them to her own need.

I. *Holiday* *Purim*

Story: A Day in Shushan (Biblical)

or

A Star—for a Night (modern)

Purim Songs or Cycle of Purim Recitations

Purim Plays: (*This may be a short paper on the growth of the Purim spiel, but it would be highly amusing if it could include reminiscences, chiefly humorous, of various amateur Purim plays the speaker had witnessed and produced*)

II. *Modern Problem*

Talk: The Delinquent Girl

or

The Big Sister Movement

Story: Patchwork

Discussion by members: How does the Council of Jewish Women face this problem?

III. *Humorous or Satiric*

Music

Story: More than Bread

Report: The Jew in the Moving Picture. (*This may be a short paper on Jewish contributions to the Moving Picture, directors, scenario writers, actors; or it might be a report on recent pictures on Jewish themes*)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

(*Note:* This bibliography of stories and verses for the holidays and general programs is in no sense complete, but attempts to be merely suggestive. It has been compiled consistent with the principles of the ideal story for platform work, as set forth in the previous pages; for that reason many sketches of great beauty and charm, but too delicate for large groups, have been deliberately omitted. Nor is mention made of the many stories of Jewish interest which are appearing in the current magazines such as the tales of Bruno Lessing, Montague Glass, Fannie Hurst, Anzia Yezierka and others, since until they appear in book form they are often unavailable to the reader. In this connection one must mention the *Menorah Journal* and the *Bnai Brith News,* two magazines which often print Jewish stories and verses of real merit, and the numerous weekly Jewish periodicals.)

Stories

Hurst, Fannie, "Humoresque," a volume of short stories beginning with the best known and most Jewish, "Humoresque," and containing other stories with Jewish types; sprightly and interesting, but may need cutting.

"Lummox," the section, "Seven Candles" being one of the most Jewish and appealing incidents of this author; will need cutting.

Isaacs, Abram S., "Stories from the Rabbis," charmingly told versions of the old Jewish legends which should

prove attractive to an audience who is weary of modern material; practically the only collection suitable for adults.

"Under the Sabbath Lamp," a group of modern stories, most of them sermonic in tone.

"Before Dawn" (*Succoth—should be cut*).

LEVINGER, ELMA EHRLICH, "In Many Lands," a group of stories written for adolescents, several of which would be suitable for adult audiences:

"The Menorah of Remembrance" (*Chanukah*).

"The Purim Players" (*Purim*).

"A Rose for Beauty" (*Shabuoth*).

"The New Land," a group of similar stories with an American background.

"The Princess of Philadelphia" may be used on a program devoted to "Famous Jewish Women," or in connection with papers on American literature, since Washington Irving is a leading character in the story.

"A Present for Mr. Lincoln" (*Lincoln's Birthday*).

PEREZ, ISAAC LOEB, "Stories and Pictures," a collection of stories of European Jewish life by possibly the foremost Yiddish writer of his generation; translated by Helena Frank; remarkable atmosphere and feeling; many of them of ideal length for platform work.

"If not Higher" (*Fall Holy Days—or general*).

"Domestic Happiness" (*general*).

"The New Tune" (*Yom Kippur*).

"The Seventh Candle of Blessing" (*Sabbath*).

"What is the Soul" (*general—must be cut*).

"Bontzye Zweig" (*perhaps his best known story to the English reader; may need a little cutting; an exquisite satire*).

"Kabbalists" (*general—an unusual background for American-born readers*).

"The Fast" (*general*).

"Shalom Aleichem," "Jewish Children," translated by Hannah Berman; sketches of European life by the famous Yiddish humorist; unfortunately they lose in translation and many of them by reason of their material will not appeal to Council audiences.

"Elijah the Prophet" (*Passover*).

"Three Little Heads" (*Shabuoth*).

"Esther" (*Purim*).

"On the Fiddle" (*general*).

Wolfenstein, Martha, "Idylls of the Gass," "A Sinner and Other Tales," two delightful collections of Old World stories, humorous and pathetic.

Yezierska, Anzia, "Children of Loneliness," "Fat of the Land."

These two collections of short stories are perhaps the most vivid and truthful of all the many sketches of the immigrant Jew in America; none are named here as the reader will find practically every tale worthy of a place in her repertoire. "Fat of the Land," the tragedy between the generations, was awarded the distinction of "the best American short story of the year," by O'Brien.

"Yiddish Tales," Translated by Helena Frank; possibly the best collection we have in English of the short stories of the Yiddish writers treating of the life of the Ghetto and the immigrant Jew. Beautifully translated and treating of almost every phase of modern Jewish life.

Zangwill, Israel, Impossible to give even a hint of the wealth of material furnished by this Prince of Jewish Story Writers, who has written with equal art of the ancient and the modern Jew, and whose stories range from the broadly comic to the tragic.

"Children of the Ghetto"; extracts, if carefully cut, may be read such as the story of "The Hymans' Honeymoon" and the story of Hannah's renuncia-

tion, which would be especially appropriate for a Passover program.

"The King of Schnorrers," an uproarious fantasy of English life; carefully cut chapters may be read, such as Chapter II, "Showing how the King reigned," or Chapter VI, "Showing how the King enriched the Synagogue."

In the same volume two studies of Ghetto life, one humorous, one tragic, and both in need of cutting if read aloud:

"A Rose of the Ghetto."

"Flutter Duck."

"Ghetto Comedies," a collection of short stories:

"The Sabbath Question in Sudminster" (*humorous, Sabbath or general program, must be cut considerably*).

"The Red Mark" (*mingled humor and pathos; for a general program*).

"Elijah's Goblet" (*Passover program, a thrilling tale of a threatened pogrom*).

"Ghetto Tragedies," a collection of short stories:

"They Who Walk in Darkness" (*general*).

"The Promised Land" (*general—may be used as feature of program devoted to study of immigrant girl*).

"The Keeper of Conscience" (*general; must be liberally cut*).

"Dreamers of the Ghetto," a collection of tales which might be successfully combined with a number of programs on Jewish history and literature; if used separately, the following should prove most acceptable:

"Joseph the Dreamer" (*general*).

"The Turkish Messiah" (*general—much cutting*).

"Chad Gadya" (*Passover*).

VERSE

"Standard Book of Jewish Verse," Compiled by Joseph Friedlander; best of Jewish verse collections, but needs to be brought up to date.

"Selections for Home and School," Marion L. Misch, a smaller but excellent collection.

"Hebrew Anthology," George Alexander Kohut, an anthology in two volumes; most selections are too difficult, but the dramatic portions of the second volume should be effective with judicious cutting.

"Poems for Young Judeans," Selected and published by Young Judea; contain more modern verse than other anthologies but little general material; highly nationalistic in tone.

"Around the Year with the Jewish Child," Jessie Sampter; a group of charming verses for the various holy days of the Jew; especially fine for holiday programs if recited by young children.

"Jewish Festivals in the Religious School," Elma Ehrlich Levinger, a number of holiday verses from various sources and a few for general occasions, suitable for young children and adolescents, but some may be read or recited by adults.

THE END